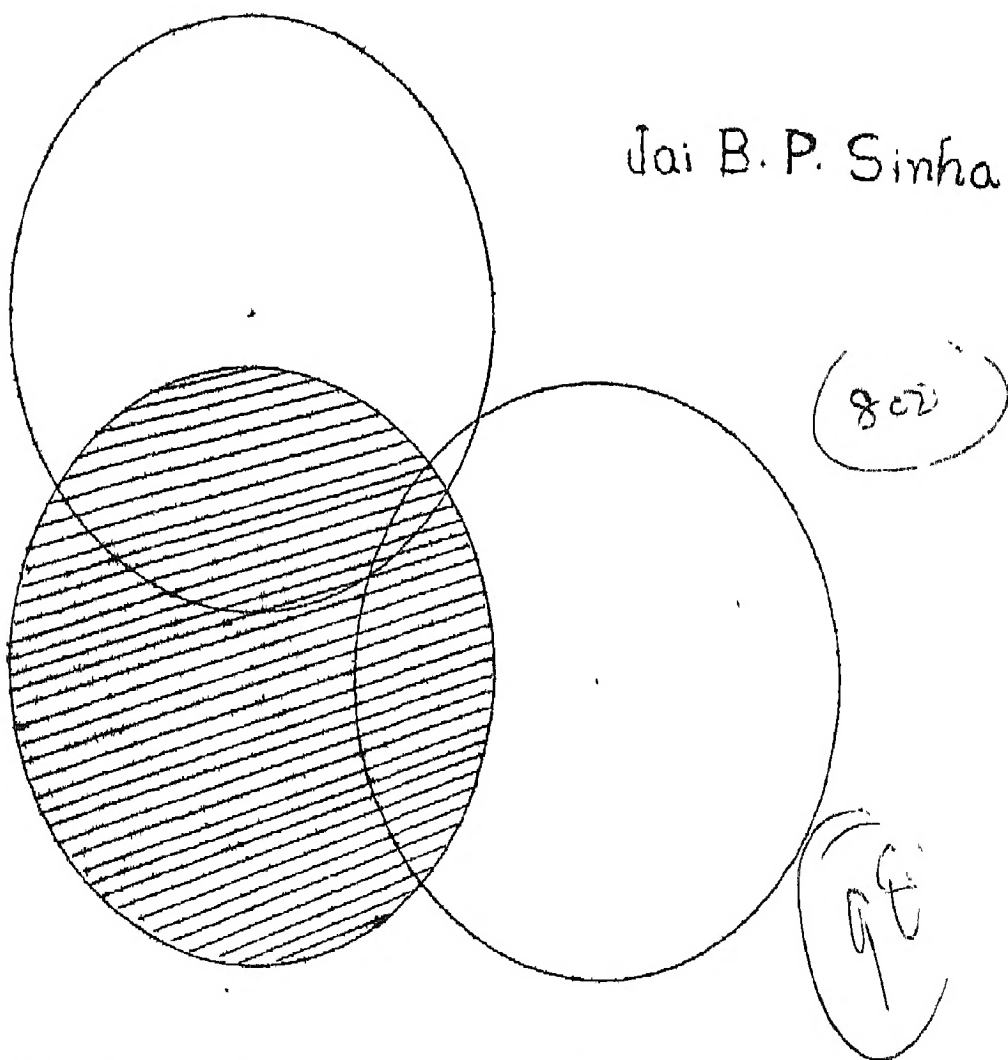


The School Complex

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Preface

The School Complex aims to integrate the Primary schools to a centrally located middle school, and the middle schools to a nuclear secondary school so that the schools of a geographical area may function as a whole - drawing on each other's resources and planning their development with minimum of external control and support. The scheme was formulated by the Kothari Commission (1966) and has been tried out in Bihar. The monograph examines the salient features of the scheme (Chapter 1), its implementation (Chapter 2), successes and failures (Chapter 3) in the existing power structure of the educational administration and community (Chapter 4). It thereafter goes beyond an evaluation and explores the feasibility of integrating the School Complex with the community so that the resources may flow bi-directionally and enrich both systems (Chapter 5).

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1. The Backdrop¹

School education in India is one of the favourite topics of discourse as well as sermons for all - academicians, bureaucrats, and politicians. Yet the achievements in the course of the last three decades lag far behind the national aspiration or the plan targets. The literacy rate with a bench mark of 16.60 per cent in 1951 has crawled through 24.00 per cent in 1961 to 29.45 per cent in 1971. The Article 45 of the Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution requires free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years. The deadline originally set at 1970 was shifted to 1976, and is now re-set at 1983-84. The enrollments, however, manifest a sluggish trend. In 1951 the enrollments in the age groups of 6-11 and 11-14 years were 42.60 per cent and 12.70 per cent respectively. In 1973 the percentage increased to 83.50 and 39.00 respectively. Even by the 1983-84, we hope to attain 95.70 per cent enrollment in the age-group of 6-11 years and only 46.10 per cent in the age group of 11-14 years. Even more frustrating is the wastage due to very high rates of drop-outs. Over 75 per cent

1. The statistics reported in this section are drawn from The Perspective Plan, Bihar State Planning Board, 1978 and a paper on "Universal primary education - achievements and problems" (in Hindi) by Dr. V. P. Srivastava, Deputy Director of Education, Government of Bihar, 1978.

of those enrolled in the 1st grade drop out by the time they reach the 6th grade. 47 per cent of the remaining ones drop out at the secondary level.

The magnitude of the problem at the national level gets all the more magnified in the State of Bihar. The literacy rate was quite low (12.20 per cent) to start with (in 1951). It has sluggishly moved upward to 18.40 per cent in 1961 and to near 20 per cent in 1971. Thus, while the national figures display an increment of near 15 per cent, the State figures show an improvement of mere 8 per cent in the two decades of vigorous planning. Besides, 5 per cent out of 8 was attained in the first decade (i.e. 1951-1961) leaving only 2 per cent credit to the sixties. Even the 20 per cent level is somewhat misleading; because 27 out of 587 Blocks of Bihar have below 10 per cent literacy rate. 236 Blocks have the literacy rate between 10 to 15 per cent. It is only a few urban centres or developed areas which have pushed up the rate to a less humiliating level. 97 per cent of the villages in India having a population up to 299 have got a primary school in the village. In Bihar only 87 per cent of the comparable villages have a primary school within the radius of 1.5 km and 57 per cent have within 2 Km of distance. Even in the bigger villages having population of more than 500, only 70 per cent have a middle school in the radius of 3 km and 67 per cent have a middle school in the radius of 5 km.

A comparative picture of national and State enrollment figures is presented in Table 1.1

Table 1.1

Enrollment figures for India and Bihar
(in percentage)

Year	Age Group 6-11		Age Group 11-14	
	India	Bihar	India	Bihar
1951	42.60	27.90	12.70	7.80
1973	83.50	56.56	35.60	23.67
1976-77	87.00	65.56	39.00	27.46

Not only Bihar figures are consistently low, but the rate of improvement is lower too. In the age group of 6-11 years, the national average has improved by 44.40 per cent while the Bihar average has marked an improvement of only 37.66 per cent. Similarly, for the age group of 11-14 years, the national average rose by 26.30 per cent while the Bihar average moved up by 19.66 per cent. Compared to the national average even drop-out rate is higher in Bihar. About 83 per cent of those who got enrolled in the 1st grade drop-out by the time they reach the 8th grade. Of the remaining ones, 40 per cent drop-out at the secondary school level. What is more frustrating is the increasing trend in the drop-out rates. It was reported to be 68.10 per cent in 1958-62, 78.20 per cent in 1962-66, and 83.00 in 1973.

There are about 52,000 primary, 18,000 middle, and 2,600 secondary schools in Bihar. About 40 per cent of the primary schools are single teacher schools.

35 per cent of the primary and 40 per cent of the middle schools do not have buildings of their own. There is a shortage of about 74,000 class rooms. Many of the schools do not have black boards, benches, chairs for teachers, or open space where the students can play. The one-teacher schools get automatically closed when the teacher absents himself.

The statistics do not quite convey the experiences of a person who efforts to visit one of these schools particularly in the rural areas. He might end up in a non-existent school or a broken uneven raised platform which once was probably a primary school. He might run into a tilted roof supported by a few bamboo poles where a buffalo is relaxing comfortably while the students of the school are taking private tuition in a shadow school being run at an affluent villager's place. With a little bit of luck the visitor might even locate a piece of wood hanging by a bamboo pole which might be the only black board around. The potential guardians grumble helplessly; but the outfit suits the students who do not have to confine themselves within the school as well as the teachers who can unguiltfully mind their own household affairs. The middle schools are a shade better - with dilapidated buildings (if any), broken chairs and a few benches. The teachers do come to the school if the headmaster happens to be a strong person. Of course, their punctuality is a matter of their convenience and their resourcefulness and

status in the locality. They also have the job of running to the government officials without which they might be put to all kinds of harassments. How does a student in any of these schools experience his learning process is anybody's guess. The dilapidated building, a three legged chair, the indifferent teacher without a blackboard or chalks, overcrowded class rooms without proper sitting facilities are the realities of at least half of our middle and primary schools. There was a time when the schools were a part of the community which used to cater to their needs. The teachers - although part of the elitistic system - commanded respect and were listened to. The government took away the school system from the community. The schools and the community got dissociated disrupting the two way flow of resources. The result is a neglected, uncared, and impoverished system which is apparently incapable of meeting the educational needs of the community.

Against this dismal backdrop, let us view the ambitious plan to attain universal education for all children in the age group of 6-14 years by the year 1988-89. The Perspective Plan of the Bihar State Planning Board (1978) provides the following enrollment targets:

TABLE 1.2

Enrollment targets in the age group 6-14 years
(in lakhs)

<u>Year</u>	<u>6-11 years</u>		<u>Total</u>	<u>11-14 years</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>		<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	
1982-83	45.75	30.13	75.88	13.02	8.49	26.51
Percentage	100.00	70.00	85.00	70.00	35.00	52.50
1988-89	44.22	41.60	85.82	27.92	26.16	54.08
Percentage	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

When compared with the figures of 1977-78, the target enrollments will require that we bring the following number of students to the school (see Table 1.3).

Table 1.3

Additional enrollment in the age group
6-14 years by 1988-89.
(in lakhs)

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>	<u>Total</u>
6-11	5.22	25.00	30.22
11-14	18.12	22.96	41.08
<u>Total</u>	<u>23.34</u>	<u>47.96</u>	<u>71.30</u>

Table 1.3 reveals that if we are serious about the planned targets we have to make arrangement for bringing over additional 70 lakhs of students to primary and middle schools. Of them about 48 lakhs are girls. According to the Draft Plan, the following are estimated to be the requirements (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4

Requirements for target enrollment in the
age group 6-14 years.
(in lakhs)

<u>Year</u>	<u>Teachers</u>	<u>Class rooms</u>
1977-78	1.33	1.83
1982-83	2.56	2.56
1988-89	3.50	3.50

The requirement of teachers in Table 1.4 is based on the teacher - pupil ratio of 1 : 40 with a large number of single teacher units. If we want to change some of them into multiple or two teachers units, the requirements will go up. For providing trained teachers, with our present capacity to train 8 thousand teachers

per annum, we need to have an additional requirements for training 80 thousand teachers (in addition to 2.70 lakhs with the present capacity). Of 3.5 lakhs of class room requirement, the additional requirement amounts to 1.31 lakhs (covering the backlog).

If we add the requirements at the secondary school level, our task becomes really gigantic. In the year 1977-78 about 5.38 lakhs of boys and 78 thousand girls in the age group of 14-17 years were enrolled in the secondary schools of Bihar. With the modest targets of 52.13 per cent for boys and 45.83 per cent of girls in the year 1988-89, we need to bring an additional 8.58 lakhs of boys and 9.03 lakhs of girls to the secondary schools. This additional total of 17.61 lakhs students will require, at the modest teacher-student ratio of 1:25, 70 thousand teachers and the same number of class rooms for the secondary schools of Bihar. In summary, by the end of the year 1988-89, we need to bring to the schools about 89 lakhs of students and 4.25 lakhs of teachers, and to construct 4.25 lakhs of additional class rooms if we want to realise hundred per cent enrollment at the primary and middle and near 50 per cent at the secondary school levels. According to one estimate (Srivastava, 1978), the Government of Bihar will need to spend Rs. 500 crores (approximately \$ 625 million) by the year 1988-89 in order to realise the plan of universal education only at the primary level. During the Fifth Five Year Plan, the Government could allocate only Rs. 75.38 crores. How will the

Government increase the grant by more than six times? Obviously, the Government has set a task beyond its means.

Because the Government has taken up itself the main responsibility of setting-up, maintaining, financing, and supervising the schools, it may be worthwhile to examine the administrative structure devised to handle the job. Figure 1.1 displays the administrative set-up at the district level.

What is most striking in Figure 1.1 is the parallel structures co-existing for the secondary schools on the one hand and the middle and the primary schools on the other. The secondary schools are supervised by the Sub-Divisional Education Officer who is under the District Education Officer. His counterpart is the District Superintendent of Education. Below him is the Deputy Inspector (or Inspectress) of Schools who supervises the work of the Block Extension Education Officer (BEEO). The BEEO is the lowest position in class two of the Bihar Educational Service. His job is to inspect the middle and primary schools, to disburse the salary of the teachers of these schools, and to look after other matters of their service. Assuming about 30 middle and 150 primary schools in a Block, the BEEO has to inspect 180 schools and supervise 500 teachers. He is virtually paralysed by the paper work and seldom gets chance to visit the schools and to find out if they exist at all. No

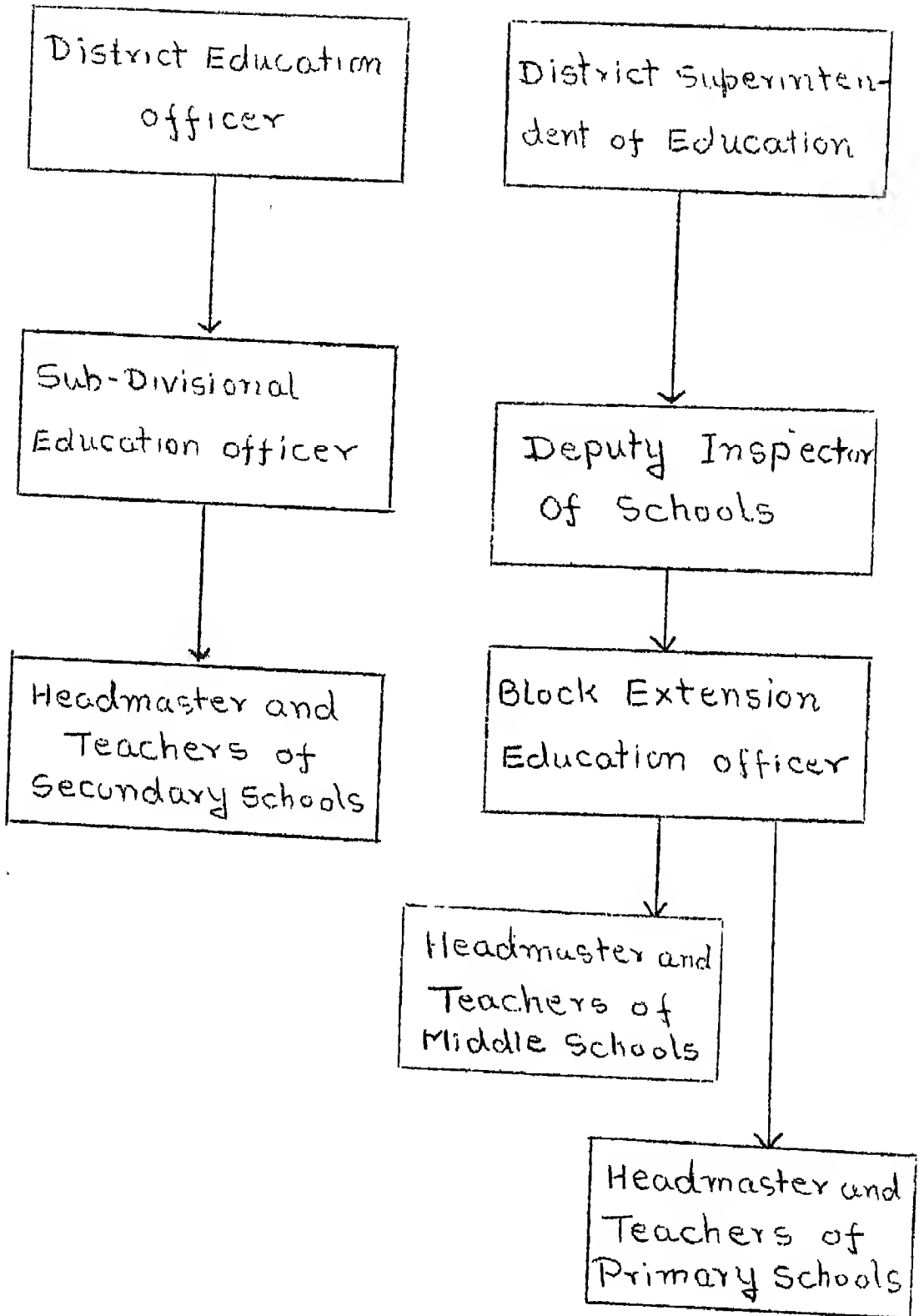


Figure 1-1: Administrative structure of schools

wonder, it is the teachers and the headmasters of the schools who have to run to him. The resultant situation gives rise to all kinds of misgivings and complaints where blames are tossed around and motives and intentions are un-necessarily attributed.

If we move a step up, we find that the Sub-Divisional Education Officer and the Deputy Inspector of Schools have to take care of a subdivision consisting roughly of 6 to 7 Blocks having 1,000 schools, 3,000 teachers, and roughly 1 lakh students. What an unmanageable load ! As a consequence, an officer hardly gets any chance to inspect any school in adequate fashion. Without the fear of being caught, the teachers and headmasters naturally get slack particularly because the physical facilities and working conditions are not quite conducive to their involvement in either school or teaching. Over a period such a state of affairs initiates a vicious circle. The teaching and the school get lower and lower priority. On the other hand, maintaining relationships with the headmaster and more so with the government officials becomes more crucial and instrumental for unauthorised absences and for all sorts of liberties. Because most of the teachers belong to the locality, the power dynamics of the area, the status and caste considerations of the various teachers, and the factionalism of the surrounding community tend to spill over the school system. If a headmaster belongs to the locality and

possesses power by virtue of his caste or wealth or commands respect for his dedication to the school or both, he can make the teachers come to school on time and to teach regularly - particularly if the teachers are either alien to the locality or are susceptible to his influence in the locality. On the contrary, if the teachers are local and powerful while the headmaster is alien, he would dare not make any demand on his teachers and the school climate drifts into a state of real laissez faire.

The point which is being brought home is that while the government took away the school system from the community, it has failed to manage it or seal its boundaries against undesirable inflow of influences. The community, on the one hand, has stopped feeling responsible for the school system because it is no longer his concern or domain. Yet it continues to encroach upon it and in a wrong way. The school system today is no body's responsibility but every body's punching bag.

The dual administration has made the situation worse. It does not only has fragmented the government resources and efforts, but has also made the schools of the same area uncoordinated and unconnected. One is struck by finding a secondary, a middle, and a primary school located in the same area and at times at calling distances, and yet there is literally no contacts, no connections, and no interactions among them. The secondary school teachers

often blame the middle and primary schools for sending unprepared students. They thus rationalise the poor performance of their students; but seldom reach out to their local middle and primary schools to help them improve their teaching and physical conditions. The middle and primary schools are equally unconcerned to their senior body or to what it can provide to them. Their universes do not overlap or their horizons do not meet. They are virtually strangers to each other.

2. Scheme of the School Complex

It is in this context that the scheme of the School Complex is relevant. The scheme was introduced by the Kothari Commission (1966). The Commission recorded that at the beginning of the 4th Five Year Plan, there were 26,000 secondary schools out of which 14,000 were in the rural areas. Similarly, 65,000 of higher primary and 3,60,000 lower primary schools were located in the rural areas. The Commission also discovered that these schools are clustered in a meaningful way. In a radius of 5 to 10 miles, there is one secondary school, about five higher primary schools and about 28 lower primary schools having about 80 to 100 teachers. It struck to the Commission that the clusters of these schools may be taken as "a fairly small and manageable group which can function in a free to free relationship within easily accessible distance. It has also a good potential for planning and guidance since there will be at least 5 or 6 trained graduates in the school---

this group built around a secondary school should be adopted as a minimum viable unit of educational reform and develop accordingly" (p. 43). The clustering of the higher and lower primary schools around the nucleus of a secondary school is attempted in a two tier system. In the first tier, 8 to 10 lower primary schools are integrally related to a higher primary school on the basis of the physical proximity. The headmaster of the higher primary school is expected to provide extension services to the component lower primary schools in his charge and to see that these lower primary schools function properly. He is to organize a committee under his chairmanship consisting of the headmaster of the component lower primary schools in his charge. The committee is entrusted with the task of planning and development of all the component schools as a part of a single Complex. The committee is also to provide guidance and supervision for day to day activities. The second tier will involve clustering of the higher primary schools around the nucleus of a secondary school. A committee consisting of all the headmasters of the higher and lower primary schools under the chairmanship of the headmaster of the secondary school is to be set up. The committee will be responsible for the functioning and development of all the schools in the School Complex. The headmaster of the secondary school will be the over all incharge of the School Complex. The School Complex Committee will plan the work to be carried out.

academic calendar and give guidance to all the schools in the area. The Commission viewed that "this group of schools and teachers can be given a good deal of freedom to develop their own programmes subject to general guidance of the inspecting staff. It should also be requested to co-ordinate its work with the local communities and to derive as much help from this source as possible" (p. 43). The Commission felt that the School Complex as unit can break the terrible isolation in which each school functions at present and will encourage cooperative efforts among the schools, help them develop an identity, facilitate maximum utilisation of resources, and a number of other positive things.

The second aspect of the scheme of School Complex was decreasing the load of inspection on the inspecting authorities of the Education Department. It has been a difficult task for the inspecting authorities to visit the schools under the jurisdiction in order to provide adequate inspections. The Commission visualised that "the Complex itself will perform certain delegated task which would otherwise have been performed by the inspecting officers of the Department and dealt with individual schools within it. Under this programme, the school will gain its strength, will be able to exercise greater freedom, and help in making the system more elastic and dynamic. The Department will also gain. It will be able to concentrate its attention on major essentials and can afford to have fewer officers

but at a high level of competence" (p. 263). The second aspect of the scheme requires greater delegation of powers and responsibilities to the complex. The Commission recorded the following:

(1) The School Complex may be used for more effective and standardised methods of evaluation of students and their promotion from classes to classes.

(2) It can be used for maximum utilisation of certain facilities and equipments which can be provided separately to each school. For example, the Commission suggested that a Complex may be supplied a projector with the portable generator which can be taken around from school to school or nucleus secondary school may set-up a good science laboratory where the students from the component schools can be brought during the vacation for practical work and demonstration. Similarly, a circulating library may be organized at the central secondary school for the benefit of teachers as well as for students. It has always been felt that teachers for physical education or for art lessons should be available to the primary schools. However, the limited resources do not permit such a facility. As a part of the scheme such facilities may be available at the nucleus school and can be availed of by its components.

(3) The in-service education of teachers in general and the upgrading of less qualified teachers in particular may be an important responsibility of the

School Complex. Specifically training programmes, film shows, demonstration lessons and other academic activities can be organized at the various schools of the complex.

(4) The complex committee may encourage each school to plan its work in sufficient details for the ensuing academic year. The headmasters of the schools can bring their plans to the Complex committee, discuss them in detail, and decide on the broad principles of development in the light of which each individual school can plan its own programmes.

(5) One of the serious problems of lower primary schools has been the leave substitute particularly for the one teacher units. On the one hand, it is not possible to provide an extra teacher, on the other hand, the school has to remain closed when the sole teacher goes on leave. The School Complex can maintain reserve teachers who can be sent to the component schools when the need arises.

(6) The School Complex can formulate a plan for evaluating the new text books, teachers' guide, teaching aids and other materials keeping the specific needs of the community in mind.

(7) In fact, the School Complex may make innovative changes in the prescribed curricula and syllabi to be used in its Complex.

The Kothari Commission was quite cautious in suggesting introduction of School Complex on a large

scale. It suggested two precautions which must be taken and which may, in fact, be the crucial determinants of the success of the School Complex.

First of all, careful preparation for the introduction of the scheme and the orientation of teachers are necessary. The Commission suggested that a few districts should be selected in each State and pilot project should be lodged. In order to launch such project, necessary literature regarding the scheme should be prepared and distributed to all schools and teachers in the district. Thereafter, the plan should be discussed in all its details in group meeting of all teachers, headmasters, Government officials, etc. unless they are agreeable, the scheme should not be imposed on them.

Secondly, not all powers should be conferred upon each School Complex simultaneously. Minimum power should be given to start with. As the committees at higher primary and secondary schools start functioning, other powers may be delegated gradually. The district education officials should monitor the progress of a School Complex and guide and direct them accordingly.

3. The Try Outs

The scheme has been introduced on experimental basis in the States of Bihar, Kerala and Nagaland. The progress in Nagaland is yet to be evaluated. There is one evaluation report (Lalithamma and Brahmanandan, 1978) of the scheme in Kerala. The

present investigation is designed to examine the scheme in Bihar. The Kerala report probed into the organizational and the working of the scheme by approaching 110 heads of the secondary schools and 200 teachers in the component schools. Questionnaires were mailed to the sample. The findings indicated that only 68 per cent of the schools introduced the scheme. More of government schools than the private ones have accepted the idea. Seventy six per cent of them have organized special committees and equally large proportion of them have set-up subject council to provide demonstrative lessons and guidance in the subject matters. The number of component schools in each Complex varies in the range of 1 to 21 consisting of 10 to 200 teachers. Obviously, some of the School Complexes are too small to be viable. Eighty four per cent of the schools have component schools in the radius of 5 kilometres and only five per cent of the nucleus schools have component schools beyond the distance of 11 kilometres. Twenty three per cent of the teachers of the nucleus schools have been exposed to training acquainting them to the details of the Complex activities. Only 2 to 8 per cent teachers of the component schools have been given the opportunity of any kind of training. Contrary to the recommendations of the Kothari Commission, none of the headmasters of any secondary schools was exposed to the logistics of organizing and conducting the School Complex programmes.

Seventy four per cent of the Complex Schools are conducting the Complex meetings on the working days mainly because the teachers were not willing to attend such meetings during off hours or on holidays. Invariably, the meetings conducted at the nucleus school. It is central and convenient place for holding the meetings. The study also highlighted the constraints of the School Complex. The paucity of time and the lack of adequate training programmes were the main barriers. Despite these difficulties, 83 per cent of the component schools were positive about the scheme, 85 per cent of the nucleus schools reported that the attendance of the teachers is satisfactory. Ninety seven per cent of the nucleus schools reported that the attendance in the meetings can be improved by more activities by the complex. One of the limitations of the scheme as practised in Kerala was the functioning of the subject matter committees. In about 50 per cent of the instances the subject committees did not visit the component schools and there is plenty of scope for improvement in this regard. Seventy five per cent of the nucleus school teachers and 51 per cent of the component school teachers were on the whole positive about the scheme of School Complex. They only felt that the scheme can be made more effective if the teachers are relieved of the undue burden of the routine paper work, special training programmes are arranged for the teachers and the headmasters, more administrative

powers are delegated to the headmasters, the programmes are made more meaningful and acceptable, the rules regarding attendance, payment of T. A. and D. A. are upto dated, and if necessary literature publishing scheme is available to the teachers and headmasters. They also felt that there should be independent machinery to organise regular evaluation of the programme, that the District Education Officer and Area Education Officers should regularly participate in the Complex meetings, and that the government officials assume more active role in the functioning of the School Complex, and in providing guidance to the headmasters and the teachers. In summary, even this brief evaluation report reflects a ray of hope for improving the school education with the help of the scheme of School Complex as envisaged by the Kothari Commission (1966).

CHAPTER II

The Experiment

1. The Setting

In the year 1975 the Government of Bihar decided to introduce the scheme of the School Complex in the districts of Sitamarhi, Nalanda and Palamau which are located in the northern, central, and southern parts of Bihar (see the map). It was first introduced in Nalanda on October 2, 1975 - the birth day of Mahatma Gandhi - and later on to the other two districts. Because the then Education Minister of Bihar belonged to the district of Nalanda, more vigorous efforts to implement the scheme were made only in the district of Nalanda where the work really started towards the end of December, 1975. In the other two districts the programme was, more or less, a non-starter.

The district of Nalanda has an area of 2,346.10 sq.kms. with the population of (according to 1971 Census) 13.06 lakhs. It has 12 Blocks. In 1975 it had 109 secondary, 324 middle, and 1,322 primary schools. Right now, the figures stand as follows:

Table 2.1

Number of schools, teachers, and students
in Nalanda district in 1977-78

<u>Number of</u>	<u>Schools</u>		
	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Primary</u>
Schools	114	336	1,342
Teachers	1,164	2,263	2,676
Students	24,697	50,034	1,51,353
Average teacher per school	10.25	7.62	1.99
Teacher:Students ratio.	21.13	19.52	56.56

Source: Report of DEO, Nalanda dated 9. 3. 1979.

Compared to the figures in 1974-75, five secondary, 12 middle, and 20 primary schools have been added. The teacher-students ratio is reported to be on unusually low side for the middle schools. Ordinarily, it comes to about 1:30. The literacy rate for the district (about 25 per cent) is above average the State figure of 20 per cent.

The district has been divided into 11 Areas. Each of the Areas has 9 to 12 secondary schools serving as nucleus for the School Complexes and labelled as Sankuls. The Areas have 23 to 40 middle schools which are called Up-sankuls, and 93 to 173 primary schools. The details are entered in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2

Areas, sankuls, up-sankuls, and primary schools

<u>Areas</u>	<u>Sankuls</u>	<u>Up-Sankuls</u>		<u>Primary Schools</u>	
		Total	Average per sankul	Total	Average per up-sankul
1	12	28	2.23	92	3.29
2*	10	25	2.50	75	3.00
3	12	40	3.30	143	3.57
4	9	33	3.66	109	3.30
5	10	31	3.10	110	3.55
6	10	29	2.90	105	3.62
7	10	28	2.80	173	6.18
8	12	34	2.83	166	4.88
9	10	34	3.40	150	4.41
10	9	23	2.55	93	4.04
11*	10	31	3.10	126	4.06
Total	114	336	2.96	1,342	4.35

Source: Report of DEO, Nalanda, Dated 3. 9. 1979.

*Selected for the study.

Table 2.2 reveals that on the average 4.35 primary schools were tagged to an Up-sankul (i.e. middle school) and on the average 2.96 Up-Sankuls were tagged to School Complex. The largest number of primary schools tagged to an Up-Sankul was in the Area-7. (Average = 6.18) and the smallest in the Area-2 (Average = 3.00). The largest number of Up-Sankul in a School Complex was in the Area-4

(Average = 3.66) and the smallest in the Area-1 (Average = 2.33). The tagging was based on the criterion of physical proximity and communicational conveniences rather than the administrative units of the Blocks. Hence, 12 Blocks of the district yielded 11 Areas. This arrangement did create some administrative problems for collecting certain information particularly census data to which we shall return later.

2. The Administrative set-up

The headmaster of a secondary school (i.e. Sankul) is designated as Sankul - Pradhan (SP) and the headmaster of a middle school (i.e. Up-Sankul) is called Up-Sankul Pradhan (USP). The SP is the chairman of the School Complex Committee consisting of the USPs and the headmasters of the primary schools. In line with the Kothari Commission's recommendations, the School Complex Committee is entrusted with the responsibility of (a) planning and executing the various developmental as well as routine matters of the component schools and (b) seeking cooperation from the community. The committee is in fact in-charge of whatever happens in the School Complex.

The SP has the responsibility of inspecting the Up-Sankul and primary schools while the USP inspects the primary schools tagged to his Up-sankul.

Thus SP inspects 3 to 4 Up-sankuls and 12 to 16 primary schools and USP inspects 4 to 5 primary schools. The arrangement makes it possible to provide

close and frequent inspections from teacher-inspectors who can understand the problems and constraints of the component schools partly because they are teachers themselves and partly because they know their local schools. The SP is also authorised to grant casual leave to the headmasters and teachers of the Complex and to consolidate their salary bills and to forward them to the higher officers of the government after due scrutiny.

In order to provide more adequate supervision geared towards the guidance of the teachers, a Subject Panel is organised in each complex. The Panel consists of two teachers of Science, two from the humanities, and one from some other subjects. The Panel is expected to visit the component schools, provide demonstration classes, illustrate model lessons, and help the teachers improve their teaching and up-to-date their knowledge of the subject. The Panel members get a token allowance of Rs. 20/- and a contingency grant of Rs. 40/- as an incentive to invest time and energy in the programme.

Taking cues from the Kothari Commission, a significant re-structuring in the government administrative structure has been effected. The dual administration (see Figure 1.1) has been integrated into one line of authority which may reach out to the school system at the Area level. The idea is not

only to streamline the decision making processes but also to decentralise the administration and to synchronise it with the academic administration of the school Areas.

Compared to Figure 1.1 (p. 9), Figure 2.1 manifests a distinct effort to integrate both - the schools of an area as well as the corresponding educational administration. As stated above, the secondary, middle, and primary schools are no longer dissociated, fragmented, and independent units. They are now organised into one hierarchically arranged whole which, through its School Complex committee, plans and conducts its own activities and programmes. The Subject Panel provides academic feedbacks as well as guidance. This whole of the schools is the School Complex.

The Complex is now under one administrative unit, namely, the Area which is headed by the Area Education Officer (AEO) and assisted by the Assistant Area Education Officer (AAEO). AAEO assumes the power which was previously vested in the post of Deputy Inspector (or Inspectress) of Schools (see Figure 1.1). He inspects the Up-sankuls and primary schools, scrutinises the salary bills of their teachers and forwards them to the District Superintendent of Education. Above all, the AAEO

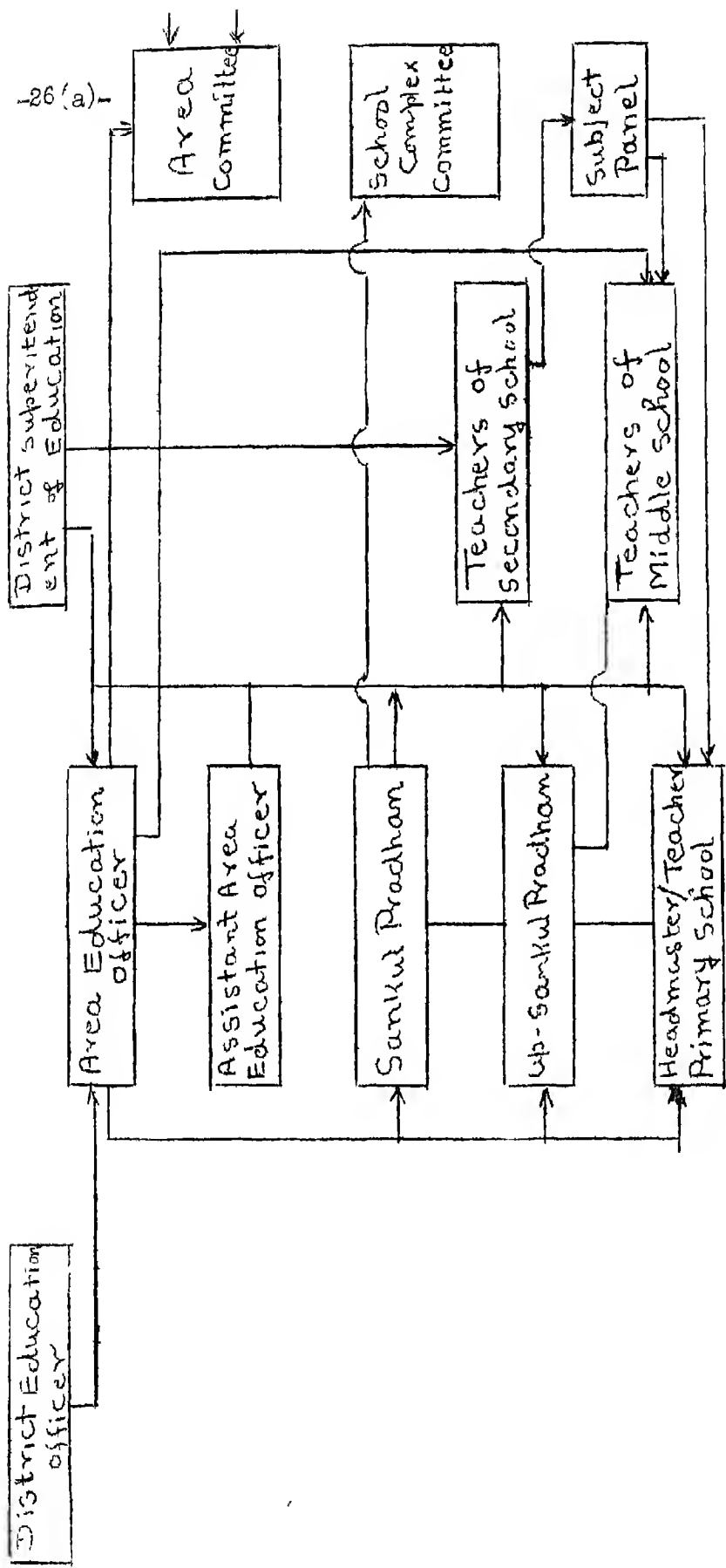


Figure 2.1: Structure of school administration in the school Complex Scheme

assists the Area Education Officer whenever so required. The District Superintendent of Education disburses the salary of the teachers of the middle and primary schools and administers their provident funds, etc. The Area Education Officer (AEO) subsumes the power previously vested in the Sub-Divisional Education Officer and partly in the District Superintendent of Education. He is overall in-charge of the Area. He inspects all levels of schools, hears appeals from the teachers from all levels, signs bills of Sankul's teachers and forwards them to the District Education Officer and administers their service conditions. He is a man of class II of the Bihar Education Service and is equal in rank to the District Education Officer and a shade higher to the District Superintendent of Education. Thus the changed set-up puts a senior officer right in the field - at a Block level - where a junior most officer was previously placed. This restructuring is designed to decentralise the decision making process. Now most of the problems of the teachers can be handled in the Area itself where they work. The arrangement supposedly facilitates communication and understanding of each other's perspective and problems. In addition, the restructuring has made the posts of Block Extension Education Officer, Deputy Inspector (or Inspectress) of Schools, Sub-Divisional Education Officer -

disappear. The money thus saved was diverted to some other programmes of the scheme.

3. The Content of the Scheme

The integration of closely located schools into a School Complex and the Complexes into an Area with a decentralised and single line of governmental authority are designed to provide close supervision and adequate helps to the schools in (a) improving the regularity and punctuality of the teachers, (b) their greater involvement in the school because they have now less to worry about their salary, leave, etc. (c) improving students' attendance, (d) providing proper guidance through the Subject Panel, and above all, (e) planning and conducting their own activities and programmes through the School Complex committee. The committee thus provides a forum for greater participation of heads of the primary, middle, and secondary schools.

These contextual factors are meant to improve the quality of education imparted to the students. In order to facilitate the process, a number of additional steps are taken.

Copies of standardised syllabi are to be made available to the schools. Annual and weekly calendars are prepared so that (a) the teachers can follow a standardised pace in teaching and complete the courses on time, and (b) the inspecting authorities - Sankul Pradhan, Up-Sankul Pradhan, or

Panel members - will know where exactly a particular teacher is in his course on a particular day in a particular class. The standardisation stretched to this extreme was contrary to the idea of the Kothari Commission (1966) which advocated flexibility rather than externally determined rigidity in the pace of teaching. It also created problems to which we shall return in the next chapter. However, it is meant to give a jerk to the teachers out of their lethargy and indifference.

A crucial part of the scheme is the exchange of scarce resources between the component schools, teachers, equipments, library books, maps, etc. The scheme required that the nucleus school will coordinate such exchanges so that the scarce resources can be maximally utilised.

The scheme also makes a provision for a centralised system of examinations at the district level. Such a system, it is hoped, will help having standardised and simultaneous evaluation of students. The questions are to be set by the knowledgeable teachers and the same set of questions are to be answered by all the students of a particular grade at the district level. Combined with centralised evaluation of answer books, the scheme can (a) cut short the time and efforts required for separate examinations at the various schools, (b) help evaluate the

performance of the students of various schools, and (c) identify the schools which need special assistance. The system obviously has direct impact on the use of unfair means in the examinations against which the teachers often feel helpless due to local conditions and indiscipline among the students.

4. The Training

Although occasional short term training programme is envisaged in the scheme, no provision is made to arrange training programmes to acquaint the teachers and the headmasters with the scheme of the School Complex and to facilitate the acceptability of the scheme.

5. The Identity of School Complex

In addition to the academic and administrative integrations, the scheme envisages emotional integration of the school of a Complex and of the Complexes into an Area. Cultural programmes, sports competitions, scouting and guiding, uniform dress, and even school marching songs and school flags are included in the programme. It is thought that a programme of good education should also consist of healthy aspirations and competitions as well as physical efficiency among students. Such programmes can draw out the best in the students, get them involved in the extra-curricular activities which in turn will release new lease of interest and energy for learning even in

the class rooms. Inter-school, inter-Complex, and inter-Area competitions may be a potent motivational force for all round growth of the students.

6. Interface with the community

The scheme looked for linkages with the community at the district, Area, and the Complex levels. The District Education Officer constitutes a District Committee consisting of all Area Education Officers, six selected Sankul-Pradhans and five educationists of the district. The committee is made responsible for the resource development of the schools, increase in students enrollment, and the development of social consciousness for the growth of education.

At the Area level, the Area Education Officer convenes an Area Committee having all the Sankul Pradhans, four Up-sankul Pradhans and five educationists of the Area. At the complex level, the Sankul-Pradhan forms a Nigarani Samiti (Vigilance Committee) drawing significant persons of the locality.

The committees are expected to provide a forum where the headmasters, government officials, and the people from the community can interact with each other, share information, and seek help. However, no specific mechanisms are evolved either to formulate concrete plans for mutual cooperation and assistance or for integrating the school and the administrative system with the community.

There is only one concrete step taken to move the teachers into the community in order to reach out the potential students who do not yet come to schools. The teachers of primary schools are to prepare a children register recording the details of such potential and yet unrolled students. The information regarding the socio-economic conditions of the parents, reasons for non-attendance or drop outs, number of handicapped and mentally deficient children etc. were quite useful information for educational planning of the area. The teachers were also expected to contact the guardians and persuade them to send their children to school.

7. The Rise and Fall of Government Enthusiasm

As stated earlier, the scheme of the School Complex was formally launched on an experimental basis on October 2, 1975 and was really made operative towards the end of 1975. The year 1976 and the early part of 1977 witnessed vigorous efforts to actualise the scheme. It was first introduced in the district of Nalanda and later on in the districts of Sitamarhi and Palamau.

By March 1977, the political events at the national and the State levels started infusing lots of doubts about the future of the scheme.

In September, 1977, the new Education Minister made a public statement in the district of

Nalanda itself that the scheme will be abolished - thus deflating the interest of all concerned in the scheme.

8. The Survey

It is in this context that the present investigation was planned and executed. The purpose was to find out what the scheme has achieved in its short span of about a year and a quarter; but more crucial, what can it achieve if given a fair trial under a conducive climate of governmental and political support and backing.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), New Delhi, sponsored a small project for evaluation. On the basis of detailed discussions with the relevant government officials at the Secretariat and the district of Nalanda, two Areas - one best and one worst - were selected. The criterion was the overall performance of the Areas in the view of these officials in the Bihar Government who were directly involved in the programme. A few statistics of the Areas are given in Table 2.3.

The best and the worst Areas are quite comparable in the matters of average number of teachers per school. If the best has an edge in the cases of middle and primary schools, the worst is a shade better in the average number of teachers in its secondary schools. The teacher-students ratio is also comparable except for the primary schools where the worst Area is much more privileged than the best. The worst also got fewer

Table 2.3

Number of schools, teachers, and students
in the best and worst Areas:

<u>Number of</u>	<u>Secondary</u>		<u>Middle</u>		<u>Primary</u>	
	<u>Best</u>	<u>Worst</u>	<u>Best</u>	<u>Worst</u>	<u>Best</u>	<u>Worst</u>
Schools	10	10	31	28	126	52
Teachers	106	102	238	203	218	157
Students	2,989	2,877	7,417	6,585	5,560	4,608
Average no. of teachers	10.06	10.20	7.68	7.25	1.73	1.70
Teacher:Students ratio	28.20	28.21	31.16	32.44	43.85	29.35

Source: Reports of respective AEOs.

number of primary and middle schools. Compared to the district statistics, both Areas are worse off in the matter of teacher-students ratio, a shade better in the matter of average number of teachers per primary and secondary schools, and quite comparable so far the average number of teachers per secondary school is concerned. On the whole, the Areas are comparable to one another and to the district average, and yet are reported to be different in their performance based on the impressions of the concerned government officials.

We interviewed the AEOs and AAEs of the two Areas in depth. With their help we identified what they labelled as the best and the worst School Complexes. Similar check ups with the Sankul-Pradhans of the four complexes helped us locate the best and the worst Up-sankuls and their best-and worst primary

<u>Area</u>	<u>Sankul</u>	<u>Up-sankul</u>	<u>Primary School</u>
<u>A. Complex group</u>			
		1 Best	1. Best
	1 Best		2. Worst
		2 Worst	3. Best
			4. Worst
		3 Best	5. Best
	2 Worst		6. Worst
		4 Worst	7. Best
			8. Worst
		5 Best	9. Best
	3 Best		10. Worst
		6 Worst	11. Best
			12. Worst
		7 Best	13. Best
	4 Worst		14. Worst
		8 Worst	15. Best
			16. Worst
<u>B. Control group</u>			
			17. Primary school
		9 Middle school	
			18. Primary school
	5 High school		
			19. Primary school
		10 Middle school	
			20. Primary school

Figure 2.2: Sampling of schools.

ools. Thus the sample involved two Areas, four School Complexes, eight Up-sankuls, and 16 primary schools. We also had a Control group drawn from a neighbouring district which is not covered by the scheme of the School Complex. The Control group included one high school, two of its closely located middle schools, and four of their closely located primary schools. The sampling details are given a visual display in Figure 2.2

Figure 2.2 shows the whole range - from the worst of the worst to the best of the best. We cannot be sure of the validity of the impressions which are deployed as the criterion, yet the spread is likely to give up a reasonably broad perspective to examine the achievements and potentials of the scheme.

We interviewed the following number and their categories of respondents (Table 2.4).

Thus a total of 216 persons were interviewed. The questionnaires were separately prepared for the various constituents and were kept open-ended. The responses were content analysed. The categories of responses developed out of the interviews of the Complex group were used to make the Control group questionnaires structured. The rationale for using unstructured questionnaires, as usual, is to elicit as many and as varied responses as the respondents are willing and capable to provide. Because the main purpose of having a Control group is to compare the responses

Table 2.4

Respondents and their categories

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Designation</u>	<u>Number</u>
<u>A. Complex Group.</u>		
Area (2)	(a) AEO	2
	(b) AAEO	2
Sankul (4)	(a) Sankul Pradhan	4
	(b) Teacher	16
	(c) Student	80
	(d) Local people	40
Up-sankul (8)	(a) Up-sankul Pradhan	8
	(b) Teacher	8
Primary School (16)	(a) Headmaster/teacher	16
Total :		<u>176</u>
<u>B. Control Group</u>		
Block (1)	(a) BEE0	1
High School (1)	(a) Headmaster	1
	(b) Teacher	4
	(c) Student	10
	(d) Local people	10
Middle School 2	(a) Headmaster	2
	(b) Teacher	4
Primary School (4)	(a) Headmaster/teacher	8
Total :		<u>40</u>

(Contd.)

<u>Categories</u>	<u>Designation</u>	<u>Number</u>
. Complex Group	(a) Government official	4
	(b) Sankul & Up-sankul Pradhan	12
	(c) Teacher	40
	(d) Student	40
	(e) Local people	40
B. Control Group	(a) Government official	1
	(b) Headmaster	3
	(c) Teacher	16
	(d) Student	10
	(e) Local people	10

the categories once developed during the interviews of the Complex group, are used for making the task of the Control group easy and for making comparisons feasible.

Because a complex is envisaged to function as a whole, the Complex is considered as the unit of comparison. Thus we had four Complex groups and one Control group for comparison. The unit of analyses, however, are the respondents comprising the five groups. The strategy was to analyse the responses of the government officials and the Sankul and Up-sankul Pradhans qualitatively because their numbers were too small; and to provide quantitative analyses of the responses of the teachers, students, and the community.

CHAPTER -III

The Outcomes

Obviously, the scheme of School Complex attempts an administrative solution of the problems of schools. It requires the primary, middle and secondary schools of an area to be integrated into a hierarchical whole, a complex, which can take care of itself with minimum of governmental support. It is indeed realised that a school system is deeply embedded in the socio-economic milieu and hence there is a programme to include the members of the community into the committees to be organized at the district, Area, and Complex levels. However, no particular mechanisms are involved either to manage the interface between a School Complex and the community, or to understand the dynamics of the surrounding environment and the way it might affect the new administrative changes in the school system, and or vice versa.

An evaluation programme, therefore, can meaningfully examine the success of the scheme as an administrative measures, and only thereafter can raise issues which are beyond the administrative perspective and yet have profound bearings on the viability of the School Complex. In other words, one would like to know (a) first of all, whether the structural changes in the administrative set-up and in the relationship between the various constituents

of the School Complex were indeed effected and to what extent, (b) secondly, what were the effects on the functioning of the government officials, teachers, headmasters, and the complex as a whole, and (c) thirdly, how were the students affected, did they start receiving better education, were they provided with better inputs for their all round developments, etc.? Only later on we can examine if these changes have spilled over the life of the community, have significantly changed the existing balance of relationships between the community and the school, or are constrained and overwhelmed by the surrounding socio-economic forces to the extent that the changes remain only scratches on the surface.

1. Administrative Restructuring

There is ample evidence in the reports of all concerned that the administrative restructuring was effected with a strong political force of the then Education Minister who created a climate of "must" in the district. In the first flush of enthusiasm, the schools located in physical proximity were clustered together and tagged in the way shown in the preceding chapter (see Table 2.2). The Up-sankul Pradhans and the Sankul Pradhans were vested with the power to inspect the academic activities and irregularities in their respective component schools. Subject Panels were organised. The posts of Block Extension Education

Officer, Deputy Inspector (Inspectress) of Schools, and Sub-Divisional Education Officer were abolished. The BEEOs of the district were transferred elsewhere. The Deputy Inspector of Schools and Sub-Divisional Education Officer were re-designated as Assistant Area Education Officer (AAEO) and Area Education Officer (AEO) respectively. Their rights and duties were re-defined and offices integrated. The Area Education Office was located at the Area level which corresponded to the Block. Thus the seat of decision making in the matters of the service conditions of the teachers, activities of the schools, etc. were decentralised from the district and subdivision to the Block level so that the decision making authorities (AEO and AAEO) may be easily accessible to the teachers and the guardians. The authorities were also in a better position to understand the problems of the schools which were not located very far in the new arrangement. The Area Office was kept under the authority of the District Education Officer (DEO) although in certain matters the AEO and AAEO were to report to the District Superintendent of Education (DSE). This dual administration at the district level did create problems of coordination and power - particularly because AEO is quite often equal in seniority, to the DEO and a shade superior to the DSE. Because the DSE had a truncated responsibility of disbursing the salaries of middle

and primary school teachers, to manage their provident fund, etc., this disparity in their rank and superiority created conditions of misgivings and heart burns. We shall return to this issue in the next chapter. As envisaged in the scheme, committees at the district, Area, and Complex levels were also organised to develop linkages, although the efforts on this front was half-hearted from the very beginning and hence the committees were actually non-starter.

2. Inspections

The crux of the administrative perspective was the emphasis on increased inspection based on the axiomatic assumption that the schools are deteriorating because they cannot be inspected regularly and adequately. Hence one significant consequence of the organisational re-structuring was the increased number of inspections. Tables 3.1 and 3.2 report the number of inspections made in the Areas under study.

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 manifest a distinct trend: the number of inspections steeply rises in the year 1975-76, i.e., during the period the scheme was introduced. In the following year the number increases further. As soon as an announcement was made in September, 1977 that the scheme is to be withdrawn, the number starts showing a downward trend. The two tables when compared indicate that the number of

Table 3.1

Number of inspections in the best Area
before and after the scheme

<u>Year</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Schools</u>		<u>Primary</u>
		<u>Middle</u>		
1973-74	4	12		155
1974-75	5	15		168
1975 first half	6	18		164
1975-76 by (a) SP /USP - (b) AEO /AAEO 13		94 19	113	99 102
1976-77 by (a) SP /USP - (b) AEO /AAEO 6		116 43	159	158 97
1977-78 by (a) SP /USP - (b) AEO /AAEO 5		106 35	141	126 79

SP = Sankul Pradhan, USP = Up-sankul Pradhan.
AAO = Area Education Officer
AAEO = Assistant Area Education Officer.

inspections of secondary and middle schools was consistently greater in the worst rated Area while the inspections of primary schools were more frequent in the best rated Area. Coming closer to the four School Complexes under study, we find a consistent trend towards increased inspections. The four AEOs and AAEOs as well as all 12 Up-sankul and Sankul Pradhans substantiated that the inspection has increased. The BEEQ of the Control group, however, reports that he is hardly able to make one inspection in a year while he is expected to make at least two. The relative

Table 3.2

Number of inspections in the worst rated Area before and after the scheme

Year	Schools		
	Secondary	Middle	Primary
1973-74	14	14	66
1974-75	24	46	33
1975 first half	25	32	47
1975-76 by (a) SP/USP	-	120	91
(b) AEO/AEEO	40	75	47
1976-77 by (a) SP/USP	-	210	124
(b) AEO/AEEO	46	126	59
1977-78 by (a) SP/USP	-	218	99
(b) AEO/AEEO	39	94	58

SP, USP, AEEO, AEO as in Table 3.1

emphasis on inspections as perceived by the teachers and the student is reported in Figure 3.1. The teacher's reports indicated whether the inspection has increased (score 2) or not (score 1) while the students were asked whether any inspection has been held during the year. Their responses were recorded on a 3-point scale ranging from Never (score 1). Only a few (score 2) to Frequent (score 3).

Figure 3.1 reveals that the teachers of the best Complex of the best Area report higher inspection scores. The Area-effect is a shade less pronounced than the Complex-effect, (none of the effects is statistically significant). On the other hand,

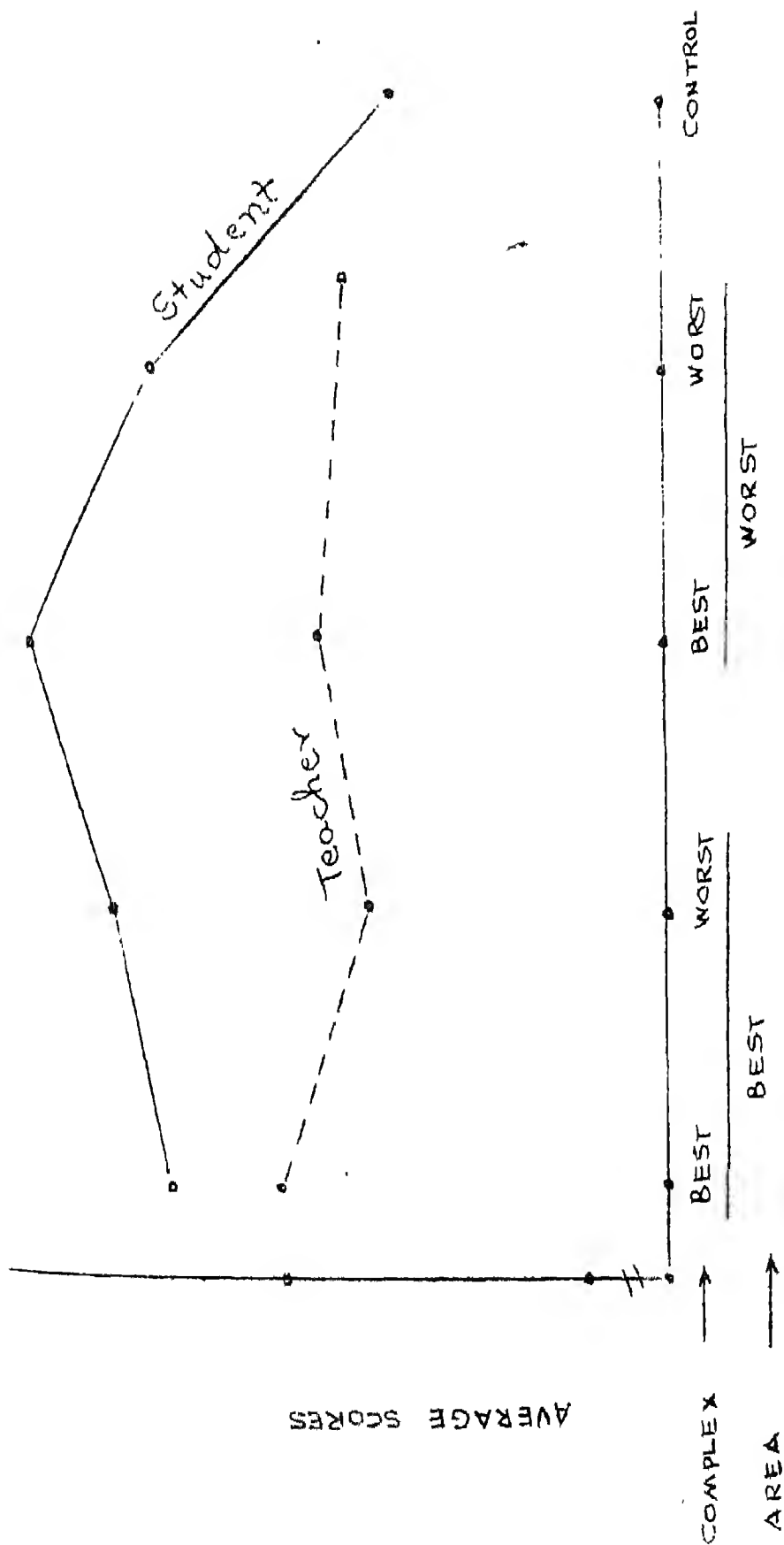


Figure 3.1: Teacher's and Student's perception of increased inspections (maximum scores 2 and 3 respectively)

students reported a curvilinear relationship: the best reporting the lowest score - only higher than the Control group. The higher scores of the best Complex of the Worst Area and worst Complex of the best Area suggest that probably the emphasis on inspection is graduated with the need for it arising out of discrepant expectations. There was a significant mean difference ($\chi^2 = 8.78$, $df = 1$, $P < .01$) between the complex and Control group students indicating that the Complex group students report more frequently held inspections now than before.

The teachers were also asked if the inspections are meant for their guidance. 57.50 per cent replied in affirmative ($\chi^2 = 5.94$, $df = 1$, $P < .05$). Their schoolwise break up was 43.75 per cent secondary schools, 37.50 per cent middle schools, and 81.25 per cent primary schools ($\chi^2 = 20.67$, $df = 2$, $P < .01$). What do these inspecting authorities guide them in? Their responses were the following:-

	<u>Per cent</u>
(a) Method of teaching	69.56
(b) Model lessons	13.04
(c) Behaviour & conduct	34.78
<hr/>	
$\chi^2 = 46.73$, $df = 2$, $P < .01$	

The greater emphasis on the method of teaching and the lower percentage of middle school teacher's reporting that the inspections are for guidance rather than for bossism or exploitation

indicate that while the primary school teachers are positive, the middle school teachers resent inspections. It should be recalled that they are inspected by AAE, AEO, and Sankul Pradhans. It is the last one which is resented more often. According to a government official, Sankul Pradhan thinks that he is Sankul-Pati, i. e., the boss of the Complex. At times, the opposite is also true. A Sankul Pradhan may have hard time in reporting against the teachers whom he knows personally - particularly in this culture where appraisal is not taken on its merit (Dayal, 1976). There is greater cultural emphasis to maintain personal relationship even at the cost of work efficiency (Sinha, 1979). Hence a Sankul Pradhan or Up-sankul Pradhan might be functioning under pressure to cover up rather than to call a spade a spade. The AEOs and AAEOs confirm this tendency. It is also indirectly substantiated by Sankul and Up-sankul Pradhans when they reported that they prefer to counsel informally rather to report if any irregularity is detected. If irregularity persists, four out of 12 still do not report because they do not believe that any action will be taken. Only five out of 12 feel that their report might cause salary deduction, and one that the teacher might be suspended. According to one of the Government officers, a Sankul Pradhan does not report against teachers or Up-sankul Pradhans sheer out of fear that they might harass him. It may be especially true if the teachers are local and

powerful while the Sankul or Up-sankul Pradhans are outsiders.

There are also complaints from the teachers against the AEOS and AAEOS and vice versa. Their proximity to each other and the latter's authority to inspect the schools have induced them to use unfair means. The authorities complain that the irregular teachers try to bribe them with kinds like rice, ghee, vegetables, etc. A few teachers, on the contrary, contend that it is they who encourage giving such grafts. The reality is probably in-between. It was indeed observed that a few teachers always hang around the Area Education Office - obviously with the connivance of the officers present in the office.

Despite these aberrations, the students do admit that the inspecting authorities talk to them - more so in the best Complex of the worst Area and least in the worst Complex of the worst Area. The result thus substantiates the finding in Figure 3.1 that the best Complex of the worst Area is experiencing most intensive while the worst Complex is least intensive inspection - in fact even lesser than the Control Group. 70 per cent local people in the Complex group and 60 per cent in the Control group report that inspecting authorities do not contact them. 10 per cent of both groups do take the initiative on their own to meet the inspecting authorities.

3. Over-all Effectiveness

There is a consensus that the scheme was quite

effective till the Education Minister induced uncertainty about its future which in turn dampened the interests and involvements of all concerned. AEOs and AAEOs report that the scheme has improved teacher's punctuality to a great extent. Now it is almost 99 per cent. The student's attendance has improved too, but not to the same extent. The Area-wise figures are given in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3.

Students' attendance in percentage

	<u>Best Area</u>	<u>Worst Area</u>
1974-75	70	75
1975-76	75	79
1976-77	87	83
1977-78	81	86

Table 3.1 shows that student's attendance has improved. The figures, however, seem to be on high side. We have located the attendance figures of the four Complexes somewhere around 65 to 70 per cent. The table also shows that the worst Area is not really worse than the best.

Of 12 Sankul and Up-sankul Pradhans, seven feel that the scheme is now dragging on due to the government's intention to wind it up. Ten out of twelve admit that when introduced it was useful. Nine felt that it improved regularity and punctuality of teachers, seven that it improved the academic climate, and six that it

boosted up the students' attendance. Only three reported that the inspection was ineffective. All except four out of 40 teachers accented that the scheme is effective. Their reasons are reported in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4

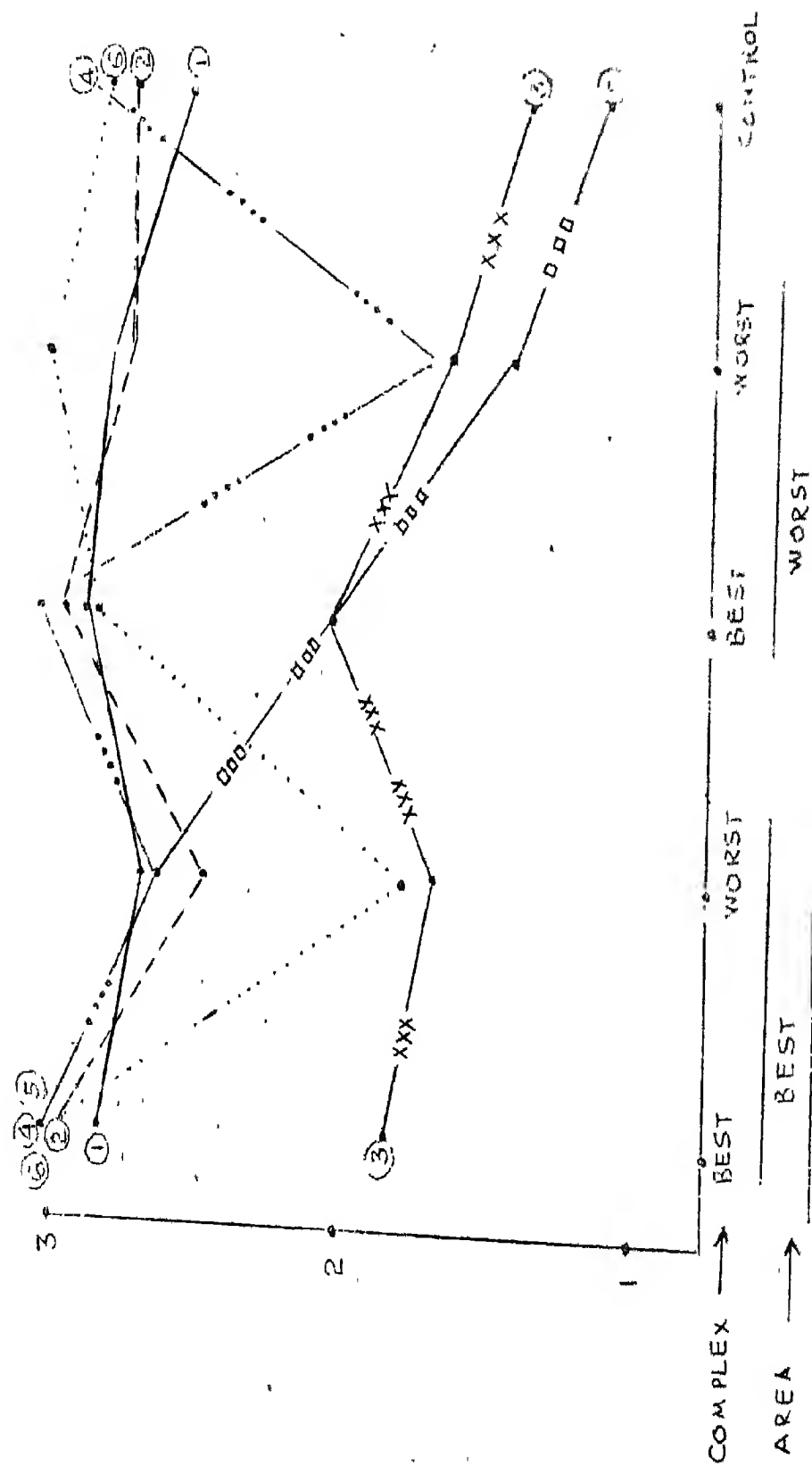
Positive effects of the scheme of School Complex
(in percentage)

<u>Effects</u>	<u>Secondary Schools</u>	<u>Whole Complex</u>
1. Regularity & punctuality of teachers	72.42	60.00
2. Academic climate	64.29	57.50
3. Student's attendance	35.71	30.00
4. Teacher's involvement	35.71	17.50
5. Solution of School Problems	28.75	20.00
6. Discipline in students	7.14	7.50
7. Utilization of resources	14.29	12.50
8. Effective inspection	14.29	12.50
<hr/>		
	$\chi^2(df=7) = 113.36 (P < .01)$	$155.74 (P < .01)$

Again the punctuality and regularity of teachers reveal the strongest impact. If the teachers come to school on time and stay longer, they are bound to teach more seriously and the academic climate is sure to improve. Student's attendance does not respond to the same degree however. Teacher's involvement does not improve correspondingly either. One of the Area Education Officers also revealed that the scheme has made the teachers come to school on time, but has not

changed their old attitudes and orientations. They do, however, teach more seriously. Almost all students (except a few in the worst Complex of the best Area) reported that the teachers are teaching more seriously than before and they assist the students when the latter experience difficulties. The students do report that substitute teachers are rare, but the courses are now being completed. Most of them also indicated that the headmasters do listen to them and try to solve their problems except in the Control group where the helping behaviour of the headmaster is significantly lower ($F = 44.17$, $df = 1, 45$, $P < .01$). Similarly, the Control group students reported significantly fewer instances of substitute teachers ($F = 3.3$, $df = 1, 45$, $P < .10$). Students ratings on a 3-point scale are displayed in Figure 3.2.

Obviously the changes in the manifest behaviours of teachers and headmasters involved some costs in terms of adjusting their life style, routine, and assuming greater work load. Nine out of 12 Sankul and Up-sankul Pradhans concede that their work load has increased due to increased inspections and also due to paper work. Nine of them accept that their daily routine has been affected, and six report spending more time at home preparing for teaching or administrative work. Similar responses were given by the teachers. 75.50 per cent ($\chi^2 = 30.25$, $df = 1$, $P < .01$) report that



1: Regularity of teachers, 2 = Punctuality of teachers, 3 = Substitution of teachers, 4 = Receptivity of headmaster, 5 = Headmaster's helping attitude
 1 = Respect for teachers

Figure 3.2: Student's perception of teachers and headmasters

work load has increased as they are required to be more punctual, to complete the courses, and to do a number of paper work. The load is felt more by the primary school teachers (93.75 per cent) than the secondary (68.75 per cent) or the middle school teachers (62.50 per cent). The differences were statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 7.29$, $df = 2$, $P < .01$). The increased responsibility and work-load are reported by all teachers of the worst Area (100 per cent) but only by 47.5 per cent of the best Area. 62.50 per cent report that the increased work-load and responsibility have altered their daily routine and life style ($\chi^2 = 6.25$, $df = 1$, $P < .01$). Again the changes are more pronounced in the primary school teachers (75 per cent) than in the secondary (56.25 per cent) or middle school teachers (50 per cent). The difference is consistent with the finding regarding the increased work-load and is statistically significant again ($\chi^2 = 15.20$, $df = 2$, $P < .01$). The worst Area teachers report more changes than the best Area teachers and the best complexes more than their worst counterparts (75 versus 47.50 and 87.50 versus 35 per cents respectively).

Why are they taking such pains? Is it only because of increased inspections? Inspections probably are quite instrumental. Moreover, the whole restructuring, the improved academic climate, etc. may have created a conducive environment. Are they recognised for what they are doing for the schools and the students? 7 out of 12 Sankul and Up-sankul Pradhans feel that they are, but

only by the community. Sixty per cent of the teachers feel that their contributions are recognised ($\chi^2 = 32.38$, $df = 1$, $P < .01$). Recognition is greater in the best Complex than in the worst ones of each Area (75 versus 40 and 100 versus 50 per cents). The worst Area, however, indicated higher score (75 per cent than the best Area (46.50 per cent). Recognition by whom? The responses are quite meaningful:

<u>By</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Authorities	41.66
Students	58.33
Community	70.83
<hr/>	
$\chi^2 = 7.52, (df = 2 \quad P < .05)$	

It is the recipients - the community and the students who recognise what the teachers are doing - and not the authorities ! Although the majority of those who are in authority may not appreciate what the teachers are contributing, the School Complex has certainly provided an opportunity to the teachers to place their problems before the government officials. 100 per cent teachers of the best Complex as compared to 57.50 per cent of the worst Complex utilise this opportunity ($\chi^2 = 11.57$, $df = 1$, $P < .01$). The schoolwise breakup is 75.00, 62.50, and 87.50 per cents for secondary, middle, and primary school. Do the government officials try to solve them? 58.33 per cent of secondary school, 66.67 per cent of middle school, and 28.57 per cent of the primary school teachers answer in affirmative ($\chi^2 = 42.09$,

$df = 2$, $P < .01$). Interestingly, highest percentage of primary school teachers place the problems and the lowest percentage perceive that the officials tend to solve them.

The teacher's perception of how students view their contributions are cross-validated by the reports of the students that the teachers are regular and punctual. They engage classes and complete the courses. Let us see how the community evaluates the schools of its area. We asked the question: Has the primary, middle, and secondary schools of your area improved in the last three-four years? The percentages of those who said 'yes' are reported in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5

Percentage of community people stating that school has improved.

<u>Area</u>	<u>Qualities</u>	<u>Complex</u>	<u>Middle</u>	<u>Primary</u>
Best	(a) Best	10	30	70
	(b) Worst	20	60	30
Worst	(a) Best	10	40	10
	(b) Worst	10	40	10
Average ..		12.50	42.50	30
Control Group ..		10.00	10.00	50

The overall improvement scores are higher in the Complex group for the secondary and middle schools and lower for the primary schools as compared to the Control group. In fact, the worst Area is quite often more unfavourably evaluated than the Control group. The

Control group reports more improvement in its primary schools while the Complex group in its middle schools. It is noteworthy that the community made it very clear that the improvements are noticed in teaching, teacher's morals, and number of inspections; but not in the material resources of the schools. The respondents were also asked to evaluate how good on the whole is the standard of the schools on a 3-point scale ranging from Bad (1) through Good (2) to Very good (3). Only one respondent in the Complex group rated a school as "Very good". The rest 49 ranged between bad and good. Their average responses are plotted in Figure 3.3.

In the light of the results in Table 3.5, Figure 3.3 indicates that the Complex group schools are more than the Control group positively viewed by the community ($F = 12.38$, $df\ 1,45$, $P \leq .01$). The middle schools seem to be in a better shape than the secondary schools which are a shade better than the primary schools (the differences between the first and the latter two were significant at $P \leq .01$). It is surprising that the Control group primary schools are reported to have improved, yet their standard is still inferior to the Complex group schools. Probably the improvement score of primary schools in the Control group is an artifact.

4. The Ancillary Measures

The integration of schools, decentralization of administration, or tightening up of the teacher's behaviours - although essential - were the means to

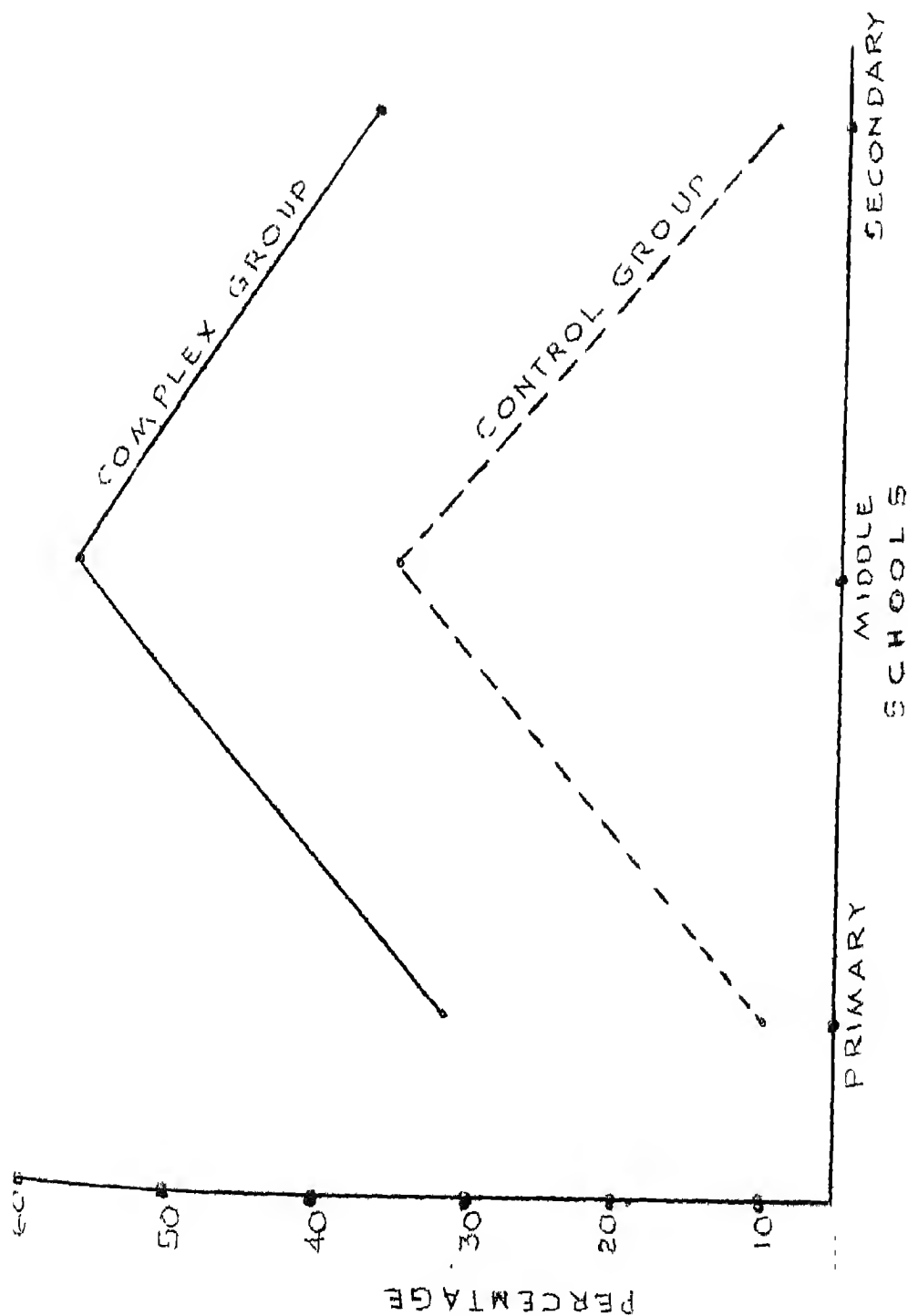


Figure 3.3: People's rating of the standard of School
(in percentage)

provide better education to students. The other ancillary measures envisaged in the scheme of School Complex was to provide a calendar differentiated into weekly teaching schedules, syllabi, free distribution of books to poor students, supply of blackboards, buckets, mugs, furniture etc., centralised examinations, and standardised districtwise evaluations of answerbooks. All these measures were effected but only in the initial phase of the scheme.

First of all, the idea of weekly calendar with uniform teaching pace for all schools was against the basic ethos of the School Complex as formulated by the Kothari Commission (1966) which emphasised the uniqueness of the Complexes and recommended flexibility in their curriculum contingent on the needs of the community. Secondly, such a standardised programme requires speedy and adequate supply of syllabi, calendar, books and other facilities. The Education Department has neither the resources nor a quick delivery system. Hence the calendar and syllabi are nowhere to be found. Some books, particularly in Hindi and Arithmetics were distributed but the delay in their process reduced their impacts. The centralised examinations were held at the district level for all grades upto the 7th; but soon became a sore in the eyes of the teachers. The Primary Teachers' Association raised lots of hue and cry against the centralised examinations. Some of the

criticisms were valid too. The questions were set by the district education officials who were not so knowledgeable either about the course coverage or the standard of teaching. Teachers who were called for the centralised evaluations were not provided with snacks and tea - which are customary in this culture. Even more potent - although unarticulated - reason was the curbs on the teacher's discretion that the centralised examinations and evaluations imposed. They were no longer in a position to distribute patronage to their favourite students and guardians who in return withdrew favours they were extending to the teachers.

The programme thus disrupted an ongoing delicate though clandestine practice - seemingly beneficial to both parties but at the cost of the quality of education.

The most serious debilitating factors were the inadequate building and other physical resources and the shortage of subject teachers. All constituents - officials, headmasters, teachers and local people - report that these factors are formidable barriers for the success of the scheme. Efforts to procure these scarce resources either from the government or the community did not go very far. A few pieces of land were donated by the public and a few buildings were repaired by their donated labour. Yet the results were peanuts in face of the mountain sized problem (see chapter 1 for details).

5. Student's Education

Despite these flaws in the running of the scheme, it did make significant contribution to the quality of education being imparted to the student. We have already reported that the student's attendance has improved. Even if we discount the official statistics, our own estimates from the various sources suggest the average attendance of about 65 per cent with about 10 per cent variations in both directions from school to school. The student's punctuality figure is also about 60 per cent. Both these figures are higher than those in the Control group which reports 50 per cent attendance and 45 per cent punctuality.

Nine out of 12 Saikul and Up-saikul Pradhans report that the students are taking greater interest in their education, eight contend that they are given home work more seriously and that they complete the home work, nine state that the students are doing better in their examinations. But only five accept that the use of unfair means in examinations has decreased. One, in fact, believes that it has increased. Eight report that discipline among students has improved. In comparison, the three headmasters of the Control group do not find any change in any of these indicators in the last couple of years. In many ways the situation - particularly discipline - has deteriorated.

The responses of the students are consistent with the above picture. They do grumble that the

schools do not provide well-equipped laboratory, library, maps, etc., but they report that they are regular, they complete the home work, and the use of unfair means has decreased. Their responses were recorded on a 3-point scale. The average scores of four Complexes and the Control group are recorded in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4 reveals that on almost all four indicators, the Complex group students have higher scores than the Control group students; except the use of only fair means where the worst secondary school of the best Area has poorer score than the Control group. The poorest score of the worst secondary school of the best area has resulted into a mildly significant Complex X Area interaction effect ($F = 6.32$, $df\ 1,36$, $P / .05$). The finding tallies with the student's reported respect for the teachers. The same secondary school shows the lowest score - lower than the Control group which is lower than the rest three complexes. Not all inter-complex differences are statistically significant or meaningful. The worst Area reported unanimously that the home work is completed ($F = 3.08$, $df\ 1,36$, $P / .10$) and the worst complex revealed highest score on the regularity of students. (The complex effect was mildly significant with $F = 5.28$, $df\ 1,36$, $P / .05$; while the interaction was highly significant with $F = 19.76$, $df\ 1,36$, $P / .01$). There were significant and meaningful differences between the Complex and the Control groups in respect to the

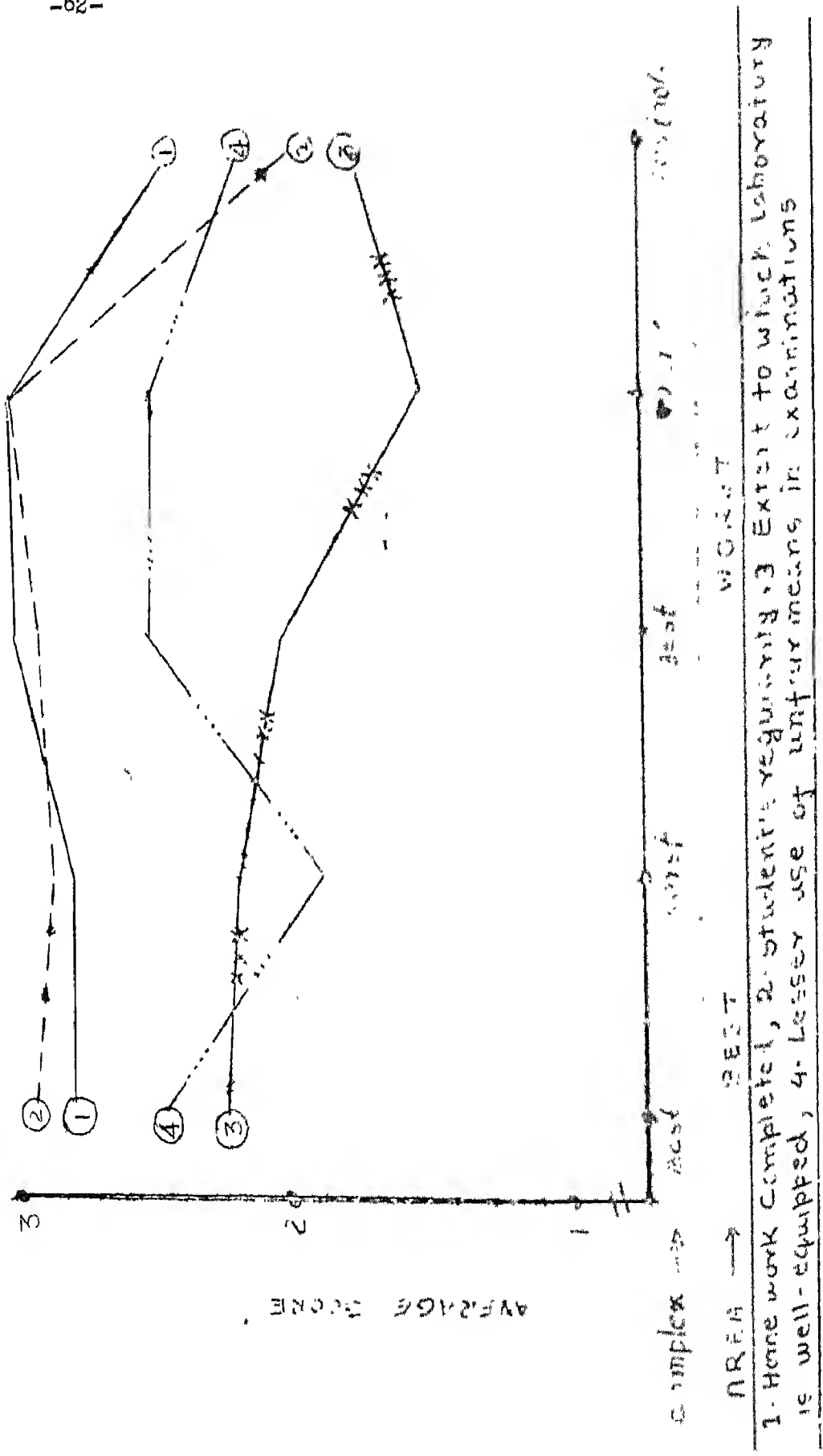


Figure 3-4: Student's average score on quality of education

home work completed ($F = 12.93$, $df\ 1,45$, $P \angle .01$), as well as the regularity of the students ($F = 132.89$, $df\ 1,45$, $P \angle .01$). Only on the variable of how well-equipped the laboratory is, the student's ratings correspond to our ratings of the complexes (although the interaction effect was weakly significant with $F = 3.23$, $df\ 1,36$, $P \angle .10$). The Control group is again a shade better than the worst complex of the worst Area. The difference was, however, not significant ($P > .05$).

It is interesting to find out why the students absent themselves, if they do. The percentage under various causes are entered in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6

Reasons for student's absences.

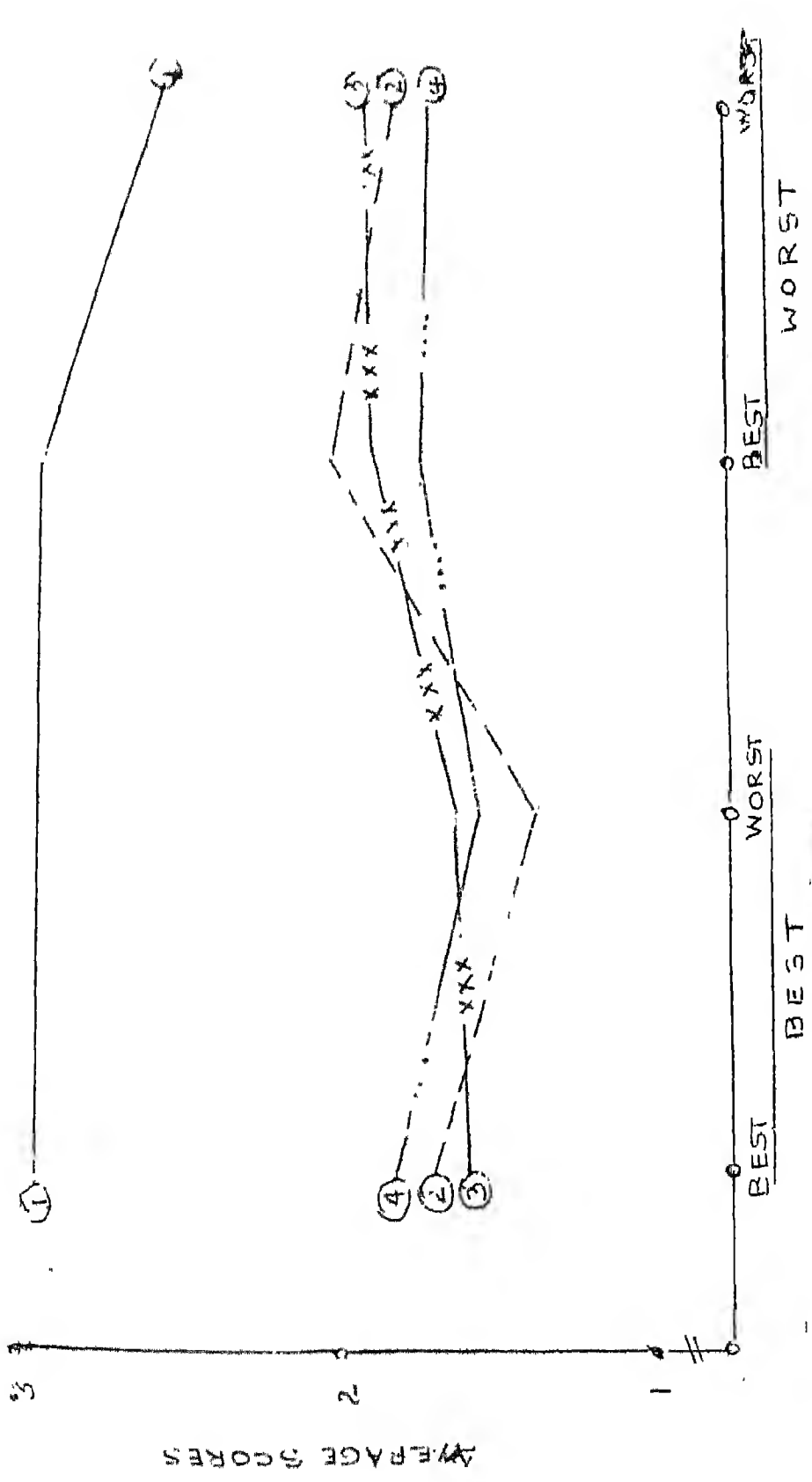
(in percentage)

Area	Complex	<u>Marriage in family</u>	<u>Illness</u>	<u>Visiting relative</u>	<u>House hold work</u>
Best	(a) Best	5.00	80.00	45.00	20.00
	(b) Worst	.00	68.18	50.00	50.00
Worst	(a) Best	.00	94.44	38.88	27.77
	(b) Worst	10.00	90.00	45.00	15.00
Average		3.75	82.50	45.00	28.75
Control group		35.00	80.00	50.00	55.00

It is depressive that near 80 per cent of the students report ill health as a reason for their absence. The poverty which requires house-hold work from a minor

accounts for 28.75 per cent in the Complex group and 55.00 in the Control. If the difference is not due to any artifact, it may suggest that the scheme of School Complex has reduced absences on this count. The social compulsions are also stronger in the Control as compared to the Complex group. The teacher's response by and large collaborate with those of the students - although the scores are not that high. It is natural that the former's evaluation will be less rosy than the latter's self-evaluation. We have already seen that the teachers reported that the student's attendance has improved. They also felt that the student's punctuality has improved, they feel more involved in their studies, their performance in the examinations has improved, they use less of unfair means, and discipline has also shown an upward trend. The improvement in the degree of punctuality was rated on a 4-point scale while the rest of the variables mentioned above were rated on the binary alternatives of No (score 1) and yes (score 2) of improvement. The scores are plotted in Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5 shows that punctuality is a shade better in the best Area than in the worst one and it is lowest in the worst complex of the worst Area (although none of the effects was statistically significant). All the scores, however, are reported to be higher than the objective mid point. The student's involvement shows an interesting trend. A perfect score is reported in the best complex of the Worst Area and



1. Student's Punctuality; 2. Student's involvement in Study;
3. Examination performance; 4. Discipline

Figure 3.5: Teacher's perception of student's behaviour

the lowest in the worst complex of the Best Area. Analysis of variance revealed a significant complex ($F = 3.99$, df 1,36, $P < .10$), Area ($F = 7.50$, df 1,36, $P < .01$), and interaction effects ($F = 11.77$, df 1,36, $P < .01$). Student's performance is reported to be higher in the worst Area ($F = 3.72$, df 1, 36, $P < .10$)- a finding, if not an artifact, is difficult to explain. When the scores were re-arranged for secondary, middle, and primary schools across the Areas and complexes, we find that 68.75 per cent of secondary, 75 per cent of middle, and 68 per cent of primary school teachers confirm that the students were doing better during the experiment of the School Complex. Only 10.71 per cent reported that the better performance is due to their use of unfair means while 25 per cent gave the credit to their better teaching methods. In fact, 62.50 per cent felt that the use of unfair means has decreased, 27 per cent report that there has been no change, and 10 per cent contend that it was never used by their students ($\chi^2 = 42.97$, $df = 2$, $P < .01$). The teachers who do not find any improvement blame either the authority (26.66 per cent) or the fear among the teachers to take a strong action (13.33 per cent). The difference was mildly significant ($\chi^2 = 4.46$, $df = 1$, $P < .05$). Figure 3.5 also suggests that the improvement in discipline, although statistically insignificant, is lowest in the worst complex of the

best Area - the complex where the students reported to respect the teachers least. The other three complexes where the teachers are highly respected disclosed greater improvements in student's discipline.

About 18 per cent of the teachers reported that only a few students complete home work, 39.29 per cent that about half of them mind their home work and 28.57 per cent that majority takes it seriously. 7.14 per cent teachers pointed out that only the intelligent and serious ones care for their home work. The differences were highly significant ($\chi^2 = 24.72$, $df = 3$, $P / .01$). When the scores were re-arranged, the primary school teachers (61.25 per cent) got more completed home work than the middle school (62.50 per cent) or secondary school teachers (62.50 per cent). In fact, 60 per cent of all teachers contended that they are giving home work more systematically now than before the experiment. But only 52.50 concede that they also examine the home work more thoroughly.

The scheme also envisaged programmes of learning through work experiences, study trips, practical training, etc. However, there is no evidence that any of these programmes materialized. The official statistics register that in the best rated Area, 286 teachers and 5,327 students utilised 6,039 and 16,592 books respectively - an average of 18.63 for teachers and 2.75 for the students. Similarly, in the worst

rated Area 247 teachers and 3,432 students utilised 4,150 and 5,871 books respectively - an average of 16.80 for teachers and 1.53 for students. However, neither the teachers nor students of the four Complexes under study showed any knowledge of extensive use of books from circulating or other type of libraries. The students were not taken to the nucleus school for getting acquainted with science laboratories. A few students complained that laboratory work is not done, that the courses are often completed in a few days, that the teachers are running after private tuition, and that the students' subscriptions for a movie show or functions are at times misappropriated. How pervasive are these practices, no body knows.

6. Extra-curricular Activities

The scheme placed ample emphasis on emotional integration of the schools of a Complex and the development of their identities through inter-Complex and inter-Area competitions in sports, debates, hand written magazines, scouts and guidance, science fare, cultural activities, marching songs, and even flags. However, there is no evidence that any amount of success was achieved on any of these counts. The DEO reports that only once in the beginning such activities were organised at the district level; but nothing further could be done due to paucity of funds and indifferent attitude of teachers.

Scarcity of resources is indeed a problem - if not the major one. The secondary schools do ordinarily have play grounds, but the middle schools have rarely, and the primary schools have nowhere any space for sports worth mentioning. Of 20 nucleus and component schools under study, only five-four secondary and one middle schools - have physical facilities for sports. Only 42.50 per cent teachers report that there are arrangement for sports in their schools. The following games are, if at all, played according to the teachers:

<u>Games</u>	<u>Per cent</u>
(a) Foot ball	93.33
(b) Volly ball	80.00
(c) Badminton	33.33
(d) Kabbadi	33.00
(e) Hockey	6.66
(f) Cricket	6.66

$$\chi^2 = 170.14, \text{ df} = 5, P / .01$$

Foot ball, of course, is the most popular, and the Volley ball is next. The reason for the popularity is the fact that these games are not costly. A large number of students can play for quite a long period with one ball. The net can often be dispensed with. Badminton requires less of space and can also be played with plastic corks, but the weather conditions are not always favourable. Kabbadi could have been ideal. (It does not cost anything). However, it is a

traditional game and does not suit with the elitistic orientation on which the modern school system is based. Hockey and Cricket require space and are expensive too. Hence they are the fantasy of the students which is yet to be realised.

The extent of student's participation in the games was rated on a 3-point scale ranging from Once a while (1) Often (2) to Always (3). The results appear in Figure 3.6. The best Complexes showed higher average scores (2.30 and 1.72 respectively) than the worst with the averages of 1.40 and 1.00 ($F = 9.32$, $df\ 1,36$, $P < .01$). Similarly the best Area had higher score than the worst Area ($F = 3.52$, $df\ 1,36$, $P < .10$). The interaction effect was also highly significant ($F = 12.94$, $df\ 1,36$, $P < .01$). The Complex group average of 1.61 was lower than the Control group score of 2.65 ($F = 12.50$, $df\ 1,45$, $P < .01$) which in fact indicated that Control group students have much higher participation rate than the Complex group students. In other words, the scheme did not make any dent in this respect.

There is a long tradition in the Indian schools to worship the Goddess of Learning - Saraswati. There is also a tradition - although neither so strong nor so pervasive - to organise dramas and musicals on certain auspicious occasions. There is no evidence, according to Sankul and Up-sankul Pradhans, that these cultural activities have increased due to the scheme.

of School Complex. Our questionnaire asked both - the teachers as well as the students - to report if such activities are held in their schools. The responses are entered in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7

The cultural programme in schools

Students of	Saraswati Puja	Drama	Debate	Musicals	Annual Day
Complex group	56.25	10.00	40.00	42.50	6.25
Control group	100.00	70.00	35.00	45.00	60.00
Teachers of Complex group	77.50	37.50	37.50	45.00	7.50

It is obvious that the Control group has a clear edge over the Complex group. In the Complex group, the pervasiveness of even Saraswati Puja is in the range of 56 to 77 per cent with the midpoint at about 60 per cent. The Control group is a lot better on this count. In the matters of holding debates and musicals, the two groups are comparable. But again, the Control group reports much better performance in arranging dramas and annual day functions. 63.50 per cent of the teachers report that the cultural activities have not increased during the School Complex experiment and 70 per cent concede that there is no effort to seek the cooperation of the community in the cultural activities. Even the extent of participation by students in the cultural activities register an higher score (average 3) for the Control

group than for the Complex group (average 2.20) ($F = 5.77$, df 1,45, $P < .01$) - although both groups are on the higher side of the 3-point scale. Only one Complex - the worst of the worst Area - was located at the midpoint of 1.5. On the whole, the best Area had higher average score (2.37) than the worst (average 2.03) and the best complex (average 2.43) than the worst complex (average 1.97) - although none of the main effects was significant. The interaction, however, was significant ($F = 7.86$, df 1,36, $P < .01$). The scores are entered in Figure 3.6.

7. Patterns in the Responses

The responses of the students ($N = 40$) as well as of teachers ($N = 40$) were intercorrelated in order to identify the underlying patterns. Let us look at some of the statistically highly significant (at $P < .01$) inter-relationships, first in the student sample and then in the teacher sample.

As one would expect, those students who report that the headmaster listens to their problems also feel that he tends to solve them ($r = .85$), if there are arrangements of game, they will also participate in them ($r = .73$), or if the teachers correct their home work, they will also discuss the corrections with the students ($r = .61$). These co-efficients reflect consistency in their responses which lends credibility to the data. A more meaningful finding was that the teacher's punctuality in engaging a class was positively

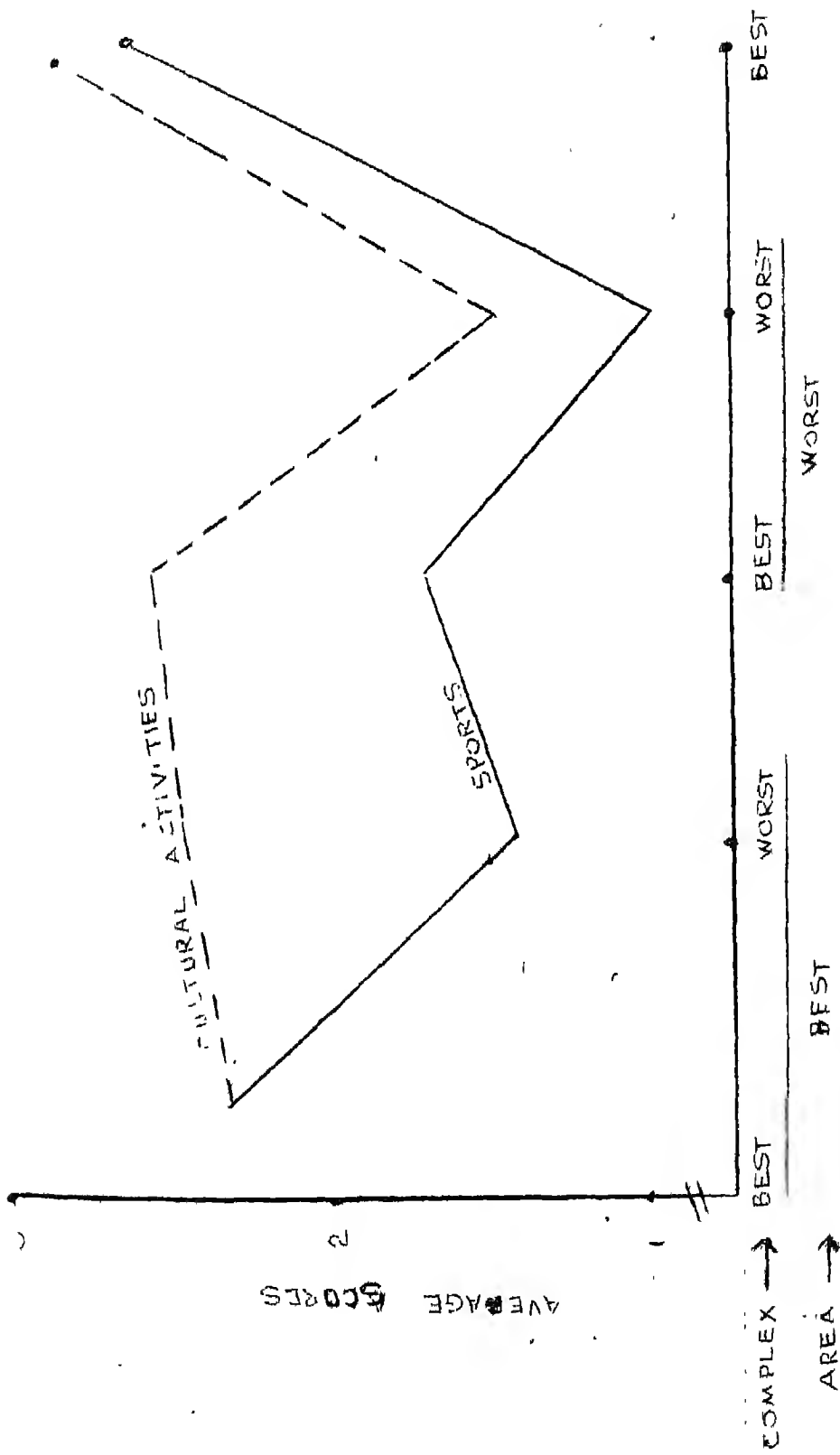


Figure 3.6: Student's participation in sports and cultural activities

contributing to the extent to which home work was completed ($r = .48$), teacher's inclination to correct the home work ($r = .47$), lesser use of unfair means in examinations ($r = .42$), and to give feedback to the students even about their performance in the half-yearly examinations ($r = .37$). Teacher's punctuality was also related to student's participation in cultural activities ($r = .28$), and even more interesting, to student's respect for the teacher ($r = .34$). That is, punctual teachers are more respected than those who are not.

Similarly if the headmaster (a) listens to the problems of students and (b) tends to solve them, the students report that the laboratory is better equipped ($r_s = .40$ & $.42$), students get feedback regarding their half-yearly examinations ($r_s = .45$, $.45$), the teachers correct the home work ($r_s = .31$ & $.36$), syllabi are completed on time ($r_s = .37$ & $.31$), students participate more in the cultural activities ($r_s = .44$ & $.48$), the arrangement for games ($r_s = .30$ & $.35$) and student's participation in them improves ($r_s = .29$, $P / .05$ & $r = .32$). It is interesting to note that if the laboratory is equipped, not only the syllabi are completed on time, ($r = .46$), but the students also participate more in games ($r = .43$) as well as in the cultural activities ($r = .35$). The positive correlation ($r = .34$) between the extent of cultural activities and completion of the courses reflects a very healthy orientation of the students.

Assuming that a headmaster and his teachers are the ones who are pace setters for a school system, the results reflect a very meaningful pattern. If the headmaster is receptive and helpful to the students and if the teachers are punctual, the courses are completed on time, the laboratory is better equipped, the home work is corrected more properly and the students receive feedbacks regarding their performance in the half-yearly examinations. Furthermore, the academic performance facilitates students' participation in games and cultural activities which are organized more often at the instance of the teachers and the headmaster. The finding is not startling, yet it reassures us about the positive orientation of the student body.

The teacher's responses provide a supportive picture. The working of the scheme of School Complex is positively associated with distribution and availability of school calendar ($r_s = .46$ & $.48$), completion of the courses ($r = .45$), greater interest of students in study ($r = .49$), greater interest of parents in their wards' study ($r = .32$) and in fact the guardians' interest in school itself ($r = .45$). It is not reported to be related to increased inspection ($p > .05$). The usefulness of the scheme is associated with increased responsibility of the teachers ($r = .42$), their spending of more time in

school ($r = .41$), better attendance of students ($r = .42$), in fact their greater interest in study ($r = .37$), and better performance in examinations ($r = .40$). The usefulness of the School Complex also lies in the fact that it is associated with guardians' interest in their wards' study which they do discuss with the teachers ($r = .40$), and that the teachers approach the relevant authorities whenever they feel any difficulty ($r = .46$). The scheme thus seems to have opened linkages of a school with the community on the one hand and the Government officials on the other.

The teachers also report significantly positive correlation of increased inspection with greater responsibility ($r = .54$) and change in their daily life style ($r = .46$) the latter two are also inter-connected ($r = .57$).

If a teacher spends more time in school, the academic climate is found to be improved ($r = .48$) which in turn is found to be related to student's better performance in the examinations ($r = .63$) and their completion of home work ($r = .40$). Completion of courses on time also contributes to better home work ($r = .43$) which is also strongly associated with student's greater interest in the study ($r = .57$). Those who are reported to complete the home work are also more disciplined ($r = .48$) have guardians who take interest in their study ($r = .59$), if the guardians

take interest, the school is also more frequently inspected ($r = .53$).

In summary, the net work of inter-relationships in the cognitive domains of the teachers suggests that while the scheme of School Complex is associated with their greater responsibility, increased inspections, and changed life style, it is also by and large associated with completion of courses, completion of home work, better performance of students in examinations, greater interest of guardians in the study of their wards and easier access of the teachers to the government officials.

8. Training

The Kothari Commission (1966) rightly recommended a thorough preparation for introducing the scheme. It suggested that the government officials, headmasters, and the teachers should be provided with detailed information about the functioning of the School Complex, its purpose, and implications. The Commission further advocated that the scheme should be discussed by all concerned so that any misgivings about the scheme may be eliminated and the scheme may be acceptable to those on whom rests the responsibility of its implementation.

The recommendation, however, was not given proper attention. A few meetings were held by the then Education Minister and some orientation lectures were given by the government officials. The scheme was more or less imposed by a political

decision through the government machinery. We could neither trace any literature (except one pamphlet) depicting the facets of the scheme nor could find any information whether orientation courses were arranged in adequate fashion for the constituents of the School Complex.

The Reports of the AEOs (1978) indicate that seven short term training programmes were arranged in each Areas at the nucleus schools or district levels for the teachers in order to up-to-date their knowledge of the subjects. The two subjects generally covered were the Arithmetic and Science. In the best Area, two of the seven programmes were of two months each and remaining five of about a month's duration. The worst Area reports four programmes of three months or longer. The rests were of one to three months. It is, however, not clear how such long training programmes - knowing the school system - were made feasible. It is also not indicated how many teachers were involved. In the absence of these details, the figures seem to be doubtful. There is absolutely no mention of any orientation course given to the Sankul and Up-sankul Pradhans. Part of the misgivings, power-conflicts, and failure in some areas of the scheme may be due to non-emphasis on training. Over 90 per cent of the teachers felt that the teachers and headmasters need training for the better functioning of the scheme.

So was the opinion of the headmasters and the AEOs and AAEOs.

There are three types of training programmes need to be arranged for the success of the scheme. Firstly, a package of information imparting activities such as seminars, meetings, lectures, etc. with the help of well prepared literature should provide Sankul and Up-sankul Pradhans, AEOs and AAEOs. and teachers the knowledge of the scheme. Their participation in the discourse is likely to get them more involved, they may even generate innovative ways of teaching, and suggest modifications in the scheme. Such modifications coming from the participants are essential ingredients for the success of the scheme.

Secondly, there should be frequent short term seminar courses for up-to-dating the subject - knowledge of the teachers. We suggest the seminar type arrangement because the regular class room set-up is often resented by teachers who feel a loss of status when they are required to assume even temporarily the role of students.

Lots of misgivings about the scheme and misunderstanding between AAEO and AEO, AEO and DSE, government officials and Sankul-Pradhan (SP) Up-sankul Pradhans (USP), SP and USP versus teachers, etc. are due to lack of proper communication, hang-over of the previous role relations, newness of the roles, and old

traditional attitudes and orientations. Properly designed short and specific training programmes in group dynamics, role reversals, inter-personal sensitivity, and motivation may facilitate the success of the scheme.

CHAPTER IV

The Power Structure

Although not quite openly articulated, a power structure seemed to emerge in the Complex Area with the points of stress and strains having direct bearings on the functioning of the School Complex. The scheme inevitably adopted an administrative perspective in which the power issues were assumed to be taken care of by the authority structure with formally demarcated rights and duties. The authority structure has been described earlier (Chapter 1, Figure 2.1).

Formal authority - although quite crucial - is not the only basis of power which is defined as capacity to influence others. A person's resourcefulness such as his caste, class, personal connections with influential others, personal characteristics and dispositions, his coalitions and groupings, etc. often disturb the neatly formalised authority structure and generate power pressures which are less recognised yet are quite potent in affecting the functioning of a system (Sinha, 1979).

1. The Area Level

The central loci of power pressures were the Area Education Office and the School Complex. The Area Education Officer (AEO) is the key figure in the Area Education Office. He is the overall in-charge of the School Complexes of his Area. He is assisted by an Assistant Area Education Officer (AAEO) who was formally designated as Deputy Inspector of Schools and had

an office independent of AEO who was previously designated as Sub-Divisional Education Officer. While the two posts are merged into one line of command, the functions are not fully integrated. The AAEO still looks after the middle schools and the primary schools, the AEO is in-charge of all schools of the complex. The two do not always see each other eye to eye. The communication channel is often clouded. AAEO thinks that AEO is not in a position to take interest in all schools, that AEO keeps AAEO always so busy with paper work that the latter cannot visit the component schools, or the latter does not have any independent or meaningful role. AEO, on the other hand, feels that the post of AAEO is superfluous, that AAEO's evaluations of the component schools do not match with his own experiences, that AAEO often fails to appraise him of the problems and issues, that AAEO quite often over passes his authority and approach the District Superintendent of Education (DSE) who, by the way, was his boss in the previous arrangement. Both AAEO and AEO agree that one of the posts should be eliminated or (according to one of the AEOs) the office of the AAEO should be physically separated. AEO is also sore over the authority of the DSE who at times is junior and yet is superior in the rank (see Figure 2.1). DSE has limited responsibilities of disbursing the salaries of middle and primary school teachers and to operate their provident fund

accounts. Quite often, AEO accuses, the AAEO and SDE together overlook the authority of the AEO. At times when AEO wants to deduct the salary of defaulting teachers, they approach DSE and get themselves condoned. AEOs strongly feel that the post of DSE should be abolished and that its functions should be vested in the office of AEO. Surprisingly, there is not much complaints against District Education Officer.

Part of the problem is the demarcation of roles and part is the power distance. Because the three posts of AAEO, AEO and DSE involve shorter power distances, and in the case of the latter two incongruence between seniority and authority, they tend to reject each other's authority and/ or justifiability. The resultant misgivings often cause delays, counter-acting each other's actions, disjointed efforts to supervise and manage the school system and vertical cleavages down to the teachers. The teachers and headmasters may also tend to play one against the other in order to further their non-academic interests. The proximity of the Area Education Office has all the more aggravated the situation. AEO is no longer a distantly located unfamiliar officer whom the teachers cannot approach easily. He and his office are now easily accessible brinking on the risk of over exposure and resultant scrutiny of the functioning of the AEO and AAEO. One of the AEOs feels that his position has been devalued by the location of his

office in the Area itself. Another keeps his office in the district town outside the Area and justifies his fewer visits to the Area because he has not been provided with a government transport. They complain that teachers often write to higher authorities against them and they feel powerless to do anything about it. They need to have more power so that they can impose discipline on the teachers and can make them execute the programme more vigorously.

2. The Complex Level

Even more complex and intense power politics can be witnessed around the School Complex. The headmaster (Sankul-Pradhan) of the nucleus school is made the head of the Complex and is vested with the power to inspect the component schools and report against the irregular or absent teachers. His domain of influence which was confined to his own school now encompasses the whole complex. He feels, according to one report, that he is the boss (Sankul Pati) around. He even gets a token honorarium which is denied to Up-sankul Pradhan who does the same kind of inspection of primary schools. It causes heart burns in Up-sankul Pradhans.

How does a Sankul-Pradhan (SP) cope with the new role is dependent on his and the teachers' comparative power positions which in turn are determined by their individual characteristics, power need and the contextual socio-cultural factors. In a

culture where maintenance of good interpersonal relationship gets the premium over the task (Sinha, 1979), SP may not have an urge to be harsh on the irregular or unpunctual teachers. The evidence reported in the preceding chapter supports that he prefers to counsel informally rather than to take steps. In fact, there is some evidence that he tends to cover up the teachers of the component schools during the inspections by AEO or AAEO. Just being soft in appraisal and reporting against a teacher does not necessarily mean that the power game is over. In fact, it might imply the contrary. The headmaster-SP or USP-by providing protection to their teachers might put them under expectations to return the favour by being loyal and subservient. Thus a nurturance-dependency framework is developed and maintained (Sinha, 1978) at times at the cost of tolerating each other's role deviant behaviours.

At this point, let us differentiate the power relationships of a headmaster with the teachers of his school versus the teachers of the component schools. Because of physical proximity, a history of prolonged interactions, and the resultant sense of belongingness to the school, the headmaster and the teachers of a school may tend to accept and relish dependency - nurturance frame of relationships. For the teachers of the component schools, the same headmaster may adopt a more assertive and exploitative stance. If he has a strong power need (which most of the Indians suffer from), he

is likely to harass them more often.

How far can he go is a function of a host of factors which are rooted in the surrounding environment. If a headmaster is a local man and commands respect and authority in the area due to his caste, wealth, or numerical and political support from the locality, while his teachers are either alien or powerless, he can have his ways. He can behave even like a landlord making the teachers feel subservient to him. If the contrary is true, he is miserable spectator of an anarchical situation where he is nothing but a puppet in the hands of a powerful subordinate. There were pieces of evidence for both the situations. There were instances, where a Sankul Pradhan dared not report against To-sankul Pradhans because they are capable of making his life hell. If both have power bases in the community, the power battle spreads to the community, and the school premises witness only part of the total struggle.

Another critical factor in the power struggle between a headmaster and the teachers is the proximity of the Area Education Office. As stated earlier, the teachers cultivate linkages with the officers and use them, not only to play one against the other, but also to counteract the influence of SP and USPs. We always found a few teachers hanging around an Area office and trying to get friendly with the office people. We were told that they give lame excuses to their head-

masters for absenting themselves from the school and hanging around the Area Office. They collect information and often manufacture news which they use to enhance their status among other teachers and thereby function as their non-formal opinion leader as well as communication channel to the Area Office. Such a situation, of course, undermines the authority of their headmasters.

The teachers have also evolved an effective instrument for their power enhancement, namely, the Teachers' Associations. We did not closely look into the functioning of the Associations. We were told, however, that the District Primary Teachers' Association felt that the centralised examination curtails their freedom and benefits. Hence the Association successfully resisted the scheme of centralised examinations and got the practice discontinued. We were also told that the Teachers' Associations took the position that the scheme of School Complex increases teacher's workload and was indeed effective in getting a statement from the Minister of Education in September 1977 that the scheme is to be abolished.

3. The Teacher - Student Interface

An aspect of power relationship which is quite often overlooked is the teacher-student interface. Ordinarily we presume that a teacher has near absolute power over the students who, according to the traditional Indian values, maintain a docile recipient stance blended

with respect equivalent to the one shown to their father. The preceding chapter did indicate that the students as a body have positive orientation towards teachers. They respect the teachers who do deserve respect by taking the teaching seriously, by being punctual, etc. However, there were also instances where a portion of the students and their parents often create problems and put the teachers under pressure. It is not a unique problem in the district of Malanda or in Bihar only. The Social Work and Research Centre (SWRC) Bulletin of Tilonia, Rajasthan (1975) describes the situation which is typical of anywhere in the country: "another handicap for which the teacher suffered is that he is faced with a group of first generation learners. There is no motivation for learning either from the family or from the community. Apart from these obstacles, a teacher is faced with multiple problems created by caste and petty village politics. A teacher cannot reprimand a child coming from a dominant and wealthy caste" (pp. 8-9). This is a case where the status and hierarchy in the community encroaches upon the domain of teacher's power and restricts it unduly. In fact, the author would go a step further. He observed that in certain instances the powerful persons of the community pressurize the teachers to award higher marks to their wards, or to help them use unfair means in the examinations. The teacher, in some of the instances, feels helpless and yields to such

pressures. As a consequence, a climate is created where those students whose guardians are not so influential tend to play tough and bully the teacher by various kinds of threats.

The power conflicts in the Control group do share some common grounds. For example, the teacher-student and teacher-headmaster interfaces are more or less similar. The School Complex has not qualitatively changed the school's relation with the community. Hence the inflow of influences from the community contains almost the same ingredients. Yet, the attempts to integrate the schools into a Complex, the Complexes into an Area, and the dual administration into one line of authority have brought the ongoing power issues into a brighter focus and have created new areas of conflicts. For example, the headmasters of the Control group do not experience any power conflicts, primarily because they do not have to (and indeed) they do not interact with each other. Their interactions with teachers of component schools are also minimal because they are not entrusted with the inspection duties. Similarly, the BEEOs do not report any power tussle with other government functionaries. They do report loss of governmental help and support and lots of interferences by higher ups but not any power pressure of the type described above.

In summary, an scheme which aims to bring the constituents of a system into an interactive and

inter-dependent relationship is likely to create power issues. Such power issues need to be examined quite thoroughly so that they do not negate the main objectives of the scheme.

CHAPTER V

Integrating School Complex with Community

1. School - A Part of Community

Before the Government intervened, a school used to belong to the surrounding community; and because the community belonged by and large to a few dominant and affluent landlords, the school too was part of the elitistic structure of the society. A landlord used to donate land, get a building constructed, name the school in the memory of his father or grand father, and cater to the day-to-day needs of the school. The local teachers used to be his men. Those who belonged to distant places, used to stay at his or at other influential person's place. They were, in addition to being the teachers, were also the academic guardians of the landlords' ward, adviser to the landlords, and part of the elite group of the village. Only the boys of the caste Hindus knew what a school means. The school system was an instrument to maintain the social hierarchy; and its quality reflected the affluence and enlightenment of its patrons.

The Government intervened to turn the school system into a place where mass education can be imparted to all concerned, where the teachers do not have to be virtually household members of a few affluent ones, and where a beginning for far reaching

social changes can be made. In the process, however, the Government alienated the schools from the community and assumed responsibilities far beyond its means. We have seen the consequences in terms of shortage of buildings, the dilapidated conditions of the existing ones, shortage of space, teachers, teaching materials, and almost everything which constitutes the bare essentials at any learning place.

While the community is relieved from its responsibility to maintain its schools, it never stopped encroaching upon the domains of the schools. The Government was wrong in presuming that it can immune the school system from the surrounding influences. We have seen in the preceding chapter how community based forces intrude upon the functioning of a school. There are also stray instances in which the community has extended help in terms of land, labour, or other kinds of donations. In a few cases, they are also found providing vigilance to the local schools. But by and large the interaction has been limited and haphazard. And yet, the boundaries of the school have been susceptible to all kinds of unregulated forces originating in the community.

"It is very difficult in the case of the school to decide where school stops and the environment starts" (Bennett, 1974, p. 15). Not only because a school - primary, middle or secondary - is located in a community and quite often in the close physical

proximity, but also because its main inputs - teachers and students - and its outputs - teachers and students again - are very much part of the community, the boundaries are invariably blurred. In fact, one may argue that the open boundaries are desirable. After all, the school is meant for the community. Its programmes and products should be useful to the community and its existence should be meaningfully integrated with the life of the community. The school has a responsibility to show that it contributes to the community, that its teaching helps the students to play constructive roles in the community, and that the school does not violate those socio-cultural values of the community which are functional and central to its life. Bennett (1974), for example, has rightly contended that a school should include subjects such as community affairs, leisure pursuits, consumer studies, marriage and parenthood, home and child management, domestic economics, transition to work, local politics, along with literature, art, music, and fashion. In sum these subjects could be a considerably intellectually and creatively stimulating than some of the dull, wan, academic pap that leaves our secondary school children often restless and bored." (p.43).

The author would like to go a step further and argue that a fuller integration of a school with the community would require that the teachers

should get involved in the constructive programmes of the community and participate in them effectively. They should not play partisan roles. Nevertheless they may have crucial roles of providing a common ground for meeting the divergent forces and to channel them towards constructive goals. Such an active intervention will help them seek out the help of the community in solving the problems of the schools - whether they relate to the building, space, teachers, or students' attendance.

There is an excellent case of integrating three primary schools of an area at the initiative of the community. The Social Work and Research Centre (SWRC), Tilonia of Ajmer district approached the Government of Rajasthan in 1974 and got three primary schools (at Tilonia, Buharu, and Phaloda) allotted to it for three years for running them on an experimental basis. A scheme was prepared in collaboration of the NCERT and the Centre for Educational Technology, New Delhi. An intensive survey was conducted to find out what are the educational needs of the area and what are its constraints and resources.

The SWRC believed that the most effective method of communicating was by relating the benefits of education directly to the tangible gains of the community. This often took the shape of financial advantages to the villages. The SWRC saw to it that the community participates from the state of planning

the scheme to its actual implementation so that the school becomes part of the chief life style of the community and does not remain an isolated building. The scheme was discussed with the teachers who were very favourably inclined. It involved six teachers all local young men and women. Two of them were priests, two farmers, one widow, and one was educated unemployed youth. All of them were young, had done their higher secondary, and were untrained. The courses of study were those which were relevant to the village life, e.g. child psychology, language, teaching numbers, and environmental studies. The method for this curriculum shifted from the pure method of learning from the books to meaningful learning from agriculture, animal husbandry, rural industries and crafts. The schools were run in two shifts : 8 a.m. to 12 noon for the regular and 9 to 10 p.m. for the drop-outs and illiterate adults. As a result of the changes, the three schools very soon became the centres of attraction where the young as well as the adults tended to flock. The people of the community decided the needs of the school, the recruitment of teachers, changes in curricula, etc. In sum, they made their school a centre of their life and a place for planning their activities.

This is an experiment where the community took over the school system and showed what an

integration of school and the community can achieve. The initiative might as well start from a School Complex- particularly through the Complex, the Area, and the District Committees. The pre-condition is that the teacher and the community are receptive to each other, understand each other's problems and get constructively involved in each other's affairs.

The scheme of the School Complex did realise the importance of the community and set up committees at the various levels to seek out assistance from the community. Yet no viable mechanism was evolved to reach out the community and to get it involved in the matters of the school. In the first flush of enthusiasm the committees were formed and meetings were held. But soon the whole thing degenerated into inaction. The community people stopped coming to the meetings partly because they were indifferent to start with and partly because the meetings could neither create nor sustain their interests. The government officers and the headmasters were not keen in holding the meetings either. They took these committees as constraints on their rights and jurisdictions. In other words, none of the parties was ready for the kind of reciprocal facilitative relationship we are envisaging here.

2. The Extent of Contacts and Interactions

Hence our investigation was directed to

explore the extent to which the teachers and community are aware of each other's problems and the roles that they can potentially play in helping each other, the amount of contact they have, and the way they feel, about each other.

Of 12 Sankul and Up-sankul Pradhans, only five report that community does provide, once a while, some help to the schools in the matters of building repair and land for a building. In fact that is all they expect from the community (in addition to their help in improving student's attendance). When asked what the school can do for the community, 10 of them mention mass literacy, 4 education in health and hygiene, and 3 improvement in student's attendance and help to the poor students. Sixty per cent of the teachers of the Complex group and 46.66 per cent of the Control group report that the community does take interest in the matters of the school. The greater involvement in the Complex group, however, is confined by and large to the building related matters. The details are given in Table 5.1.

While the Complex group reports greater community's interest in the matters of building construction, repair, and the management of the school, the Control group is more interested in the type of education being given to their children. It seems that the scheme did arouse some interest of the

community in the area is the most serious concern to the school.

Table 5.1

Nature of community's interest in schools
(in percentage)

	<u>Complex Group</u>	<u>Control Group</u>
(a) Building matters	69.56	31.25
(b) Management of school	26.09	19.00
(c) Academic matters	70.43	42.60
(d) Financial matters	17.76	.06

About 65 per cent of the teachers of the Complex group do want to seek community's help; 76.52 per cent of them in repairing and constructing of school buildings, 30.76 per cent in improving the discipline and lesser use of unfair means in examinations, 19.38 per cent in improving the student's attendance, and only 11.54 per cent in improving the academic standard of the school. It is interesting to note that when the teachers were asked about what they can do for the community, 82.50 per cent mention educating the people about the value of education, 27.50 per cent to educate them in the matters of health and hygiene, 10 per cent in improving student's attendance, 7.50 per cent in helping the poor students, and 7.50 per cent in facilitating social change. Only 25 per cent of teachers report making any effort to bring the school going children to school by contacting

their parents, and about 32 per cent of them claim any success.

It is interesting to note that the headmasters and the teachers while lament the indifferent attitude of the community, their expectations do not go beyond one way help from the community in the matters of constructing and repairing buildings and improving the discipline of students. They do not want to go out of their limited elistic role of educating the people from the vintage point of their teachership. There is no mention that they can learn from the community about new and socially more relevant curricula or that they can participate in community's affairs and can help the community solve some of its pressing problems or at least share their concerns. It seems that the teachers want to maintain their aloofness, play their limited role of teaching, and are unconcerned with the surrounding milieu.

The insufficient interaction between the community and the school is evident from the finding that only 45 per cent of the respondents from the community in the Complex group and 30 per cent from the Control group are aware that meetings of teachers and guardians are held in the school. Of those who are aware, 60 per cent in the Complex group and 70 per cent in the Control group report that the guardians are not necessarily invited. This shows

that while some of the respondents do not know that meetings are held, they have at any rate been involved in them. Do they meet the school teachers? The responses are entered in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Percentage of community people who report meeting teachers

<u>Teachers of -</u>	<u>Control Group</u>	<u>Experimental Group</u>
(a) Primary School	72.50	40.00
(b) Middle School	77.50	50.00
(c) Secondary School	75.00	20.00

$$\chi^2 = 25.02, df = 2, p < .01$$

It seems that there is a low percentage of community with teachers in the primary schools of the Control group as well as in the schools of primary schools of the Experimental group. On the whole the Control group reports a higher percentage (with such statistically insignificant difference) than the Experimental group (Average 40.33 per cent) than the Control group (Average 47.30 per cent). In other words, the percentage is quite low. In other words, more or less than half of the respondents are not meeting any teacher of the schools.

Even more revealing is the nature of their contacts which has apparent implications for the quality of interactions. The respondent's information regarding where do they meet the teachers are

entered in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3

Percentage of respondents indicating how they meet the teachers

<u>Mode of meeting</u>	<u>Complex Group</u>	<u>Control Group</u>
(a) Respondents go to School		
Primary School	25.00	80.00
Middle School	25.00	50.00
Secondary School	7.50	20.00
(b) They run into each other		
Primary School	27.50	90.00
Middle School	52.50	50.00
Secondary School	22.50	20.00
(c) Teachers come to respondent's place		
Primary School	2.50	20.00
Middle School	15.00	20.00
Secondary School	7.50	20.00

Table 5.3 shows that the scores are higher for the Control group than for the Complex group suggesting that all three modes are reported more often in the former than in the latter case - a finding which seems to contradict the previous one. A more crucial finding in both groups is that it is the community people who go to the school or they meet the teachers accidentally - particularly the latter mode is much more pronounced than the former in the Complex group. That is, the people from the community

more often run into the teachers of the school than they go to the school and meet them with purpose. Very few report that teachers visit their home in the Complex group. On the whole high school teachers have lesser contacts than the middle or primary school teachers. When they meet, they do not always discuss the problems of the school. In the Complex group, only 27.50 per cent of those who meet the primary school teachers discuss the school problems, 40 per cent discuss with the middle school teachers, and 17.50 per cent with the secondary school teachers ($\chi^2 = 8.96$, $df = 2$, $P < .01$). The corresponding percentages for the Control group are 50.00, 25.00, and 00. That is, not a single respondent of the Control group reports discussing school matters with the teachers of the secondary schools.

Probably, they are not so involved in the school problems. Are they concerned about the study of their wards? Near all of them respond in unequivocal affirmative. Does it mean that whenever they meet the teachers, they discuss the study problems of their ward? Their responses are not that positive. The details are given in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 shows that on the average, 45.83 per cent of the Complex group and 43.33 per cent of the Control group of respondents discuss the study problems of their wards. While these percentages

Table 5.4

Percentage of community people who discuss study problems of their wards with the teachers

<u>Schools</u>	<u>Complex Group</u>	<u>Control Group</u>
(a) Primary	37.50	70.00
(b) Middle	60.00	40.00
(c) Secondary	40.00	20.00

$$\chi^2 (df = 2) = 5.97, p < .05$$

are higher than of those who discuss the school problems, they are still on the low side. In other words, more respondents discuss the problems of their wards than those who discuss school problems, although majority do not discuss either. In the Complex group the percentages are higher for the middle and secondary schools and lower for the primary schools as compared to the Control group. In the Complex group, the problems of both types are discussed more frequently with the middle school teachers while the highest percentage in the Control group is reported for the primary schools.

Does the community know what the problems of its schools are? Of course it does. Their perception of the problems is recorded in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5

Problems of schools in the eyes of community
(in percentage)

	<u>Complex Group</u>				<u>Control Group</u>			
	<u>P</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>X²</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>S</u>	<u>X²</u>
(a) Building, approach road, accommodation	86	89	17	52.27**	50	30	00	-
(b) Regularity and punctuality of teachers	36	7	33	19.32**	50	30	10	26.66**
(c) Shortage of teachers and equipments	78	59	25	21.12**	80	40	20	40.00**
(d) Poor discipline	00	2	2	--	40	40	20	8.00*
(e) Poor teaching	28	33	17	15.64**	60	40	20	20.00**
(f) Inadequate facilities for sports etc.	78	89	56	11.19**	90	40	20	28.00**

** $P < .01$; P = Primary, M = Middle, and S = Secondary Schools.

* $P < .02$;

Table 5.5 shows that building, approach road, accommodation for teachers and students, shortage of teachers and equipments, and inadequate facilities for sports are perceived to be the acute problems particularly for the primary schools. The secondary schools are relatively better off. The community's perception of the Control group schools is much less differentiated than that of the Complex group. Discipline and poor teaching are more serious problems in the Control than

in the Complex group. One possible reason may be the seriousness with which teachers of the Complex group teach their students. We have seen in the preceding chapter that the issue of student's discipline is tied up with the seriousness of teaching, receptivity and helping attitude of the headmaster, etc. which are emphasised in the scheme of School Complex. Of course, this is a post-hoc interpretation. Nevertheless, it is consistent with the general picture we are getting of the Complex and Control group schools.

Almost all respondents from the community in both groups feel obligated to the schools and are generally inclined to extend their help. Yet 29 per cent of the Complex group and 66.67 per cent of the Control group also feel that it is by and large the government's responsibility to solve the schools' problems. Again the Complex group seems more receptive than the Control group, although 37.77 per cent of the former and 33.33 per cent respondents in latter group feel that they are poor and that is why they are not in a position to extend assistance in the major problem areas.

We have earlier discussed that the teacher-community interaction is insufficient. Part of the reason was stated to be the teacher's orientation itself. Community does not seem to lack understanding of the schools' problems. It is the poverty and

the feeling that school is government's concern which are responsible for the community's indifference. Another reason is stated to be the distance at which the schools are located. Primary and middle schools are within the radius of roughly a kilometre or so. But the secondary schools are located at the distances of about 2 km. in the Complex group and about 1.50 km. in the Control group. This distance affects the extent to which there is teacher-community contact ($r = .38$, $P < .01$). The contact was also correlated with teacher's help to the community ($r = .45$, $P < .01$) and the extent to which people of the community are well received during cultural activities of the school ($r = .51$, $P < .01$). The respondents' responses on 2-point scale were plotted in Figure 5.1 in order to examine the inter-complex differences.

Figure 5.1 manifests a trend (although statistically insignificant) that the best Complex of the best Area reports more of contacts between teacher and the community, help from the teacher to the community, and respect for the community during cultural activities of the schools. The lowest scores are reported in the worst Complex of the worst Area on all three counts. The Complexes in-between have the scores in the middle. (Only teacher's approach behaviour has manifested a mildly significant Complex x Area interaction effect with $F = 4.74$, $P < .05$).

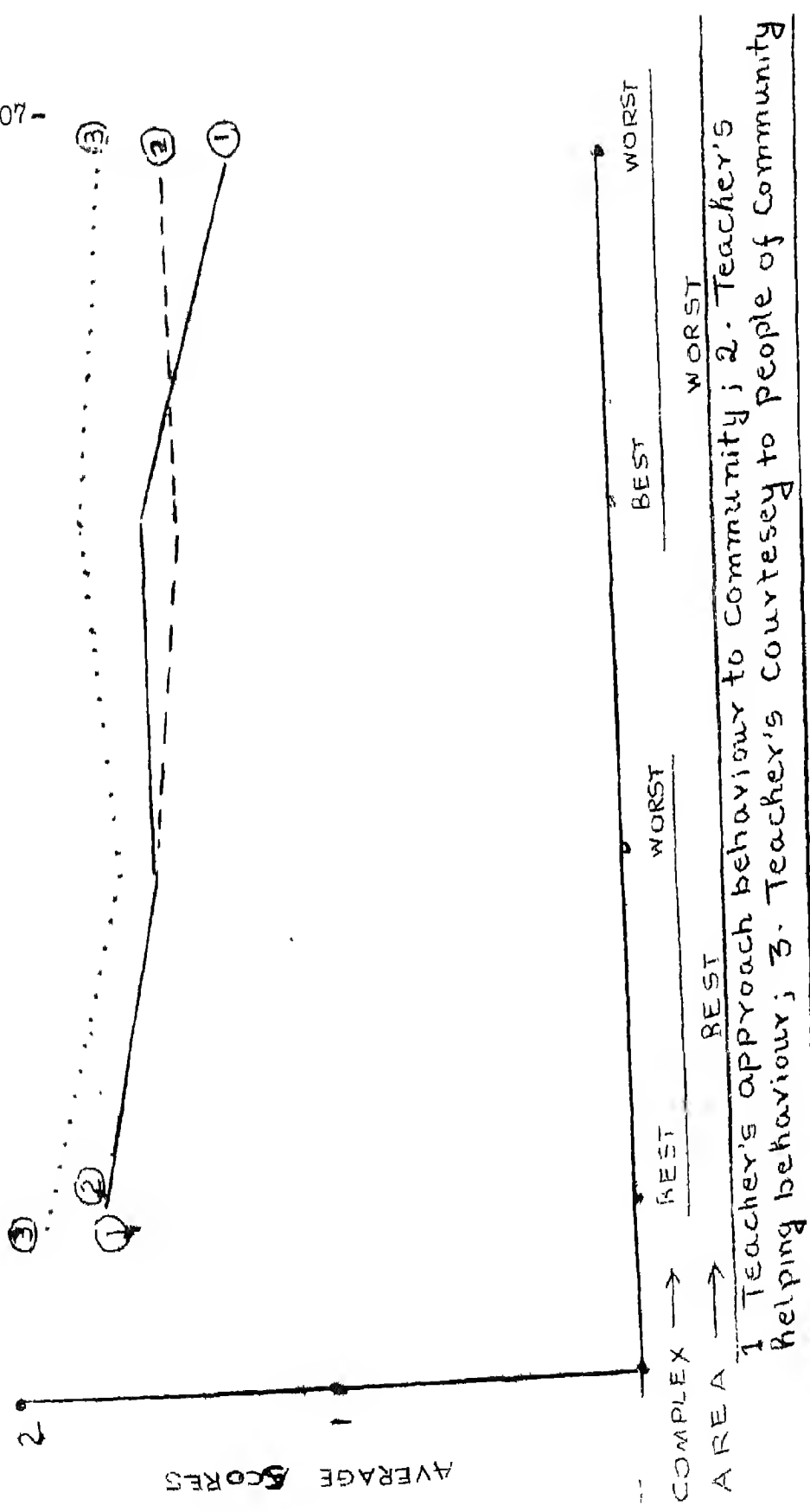


Figure 5.1 : Community's perception of teacher's behaviour

df 1,36, $P < .05$).

The interface between the Area office and the community also reflects some quite interesting relationships. The community's approach behaviour to the government officials was positively associated with the latter's tendency to talk to the local people when they come for inspection ($r = .27$, $P < .05$) and the local people's knowledge that an Area committee has been set-up ($r = .53$, $P < .01$). Of course, the awareness of the existence of Area committee is also a function of the distance of the Complex school from the village ($r = .32$, $P < .05$). The inter-complex differences are plotted in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2 reveals, in consistent with the above finding, that the best Complex of the best Area has almost the highest and the worst Complex of the worst Area has the lowest scores on all these counts. That is, the Complex reports more of community's approach behaviour to government officials and vice versa and more awareness of the Area committee. On two counts, community approach behaviour and its knowledge of the Area committee, the worst complex of the best Area has scores identical to the best Complex. Analyses of variance revealed that all effects were statistically significant. The F ratios and their level of significance are reported in Table 5.6.

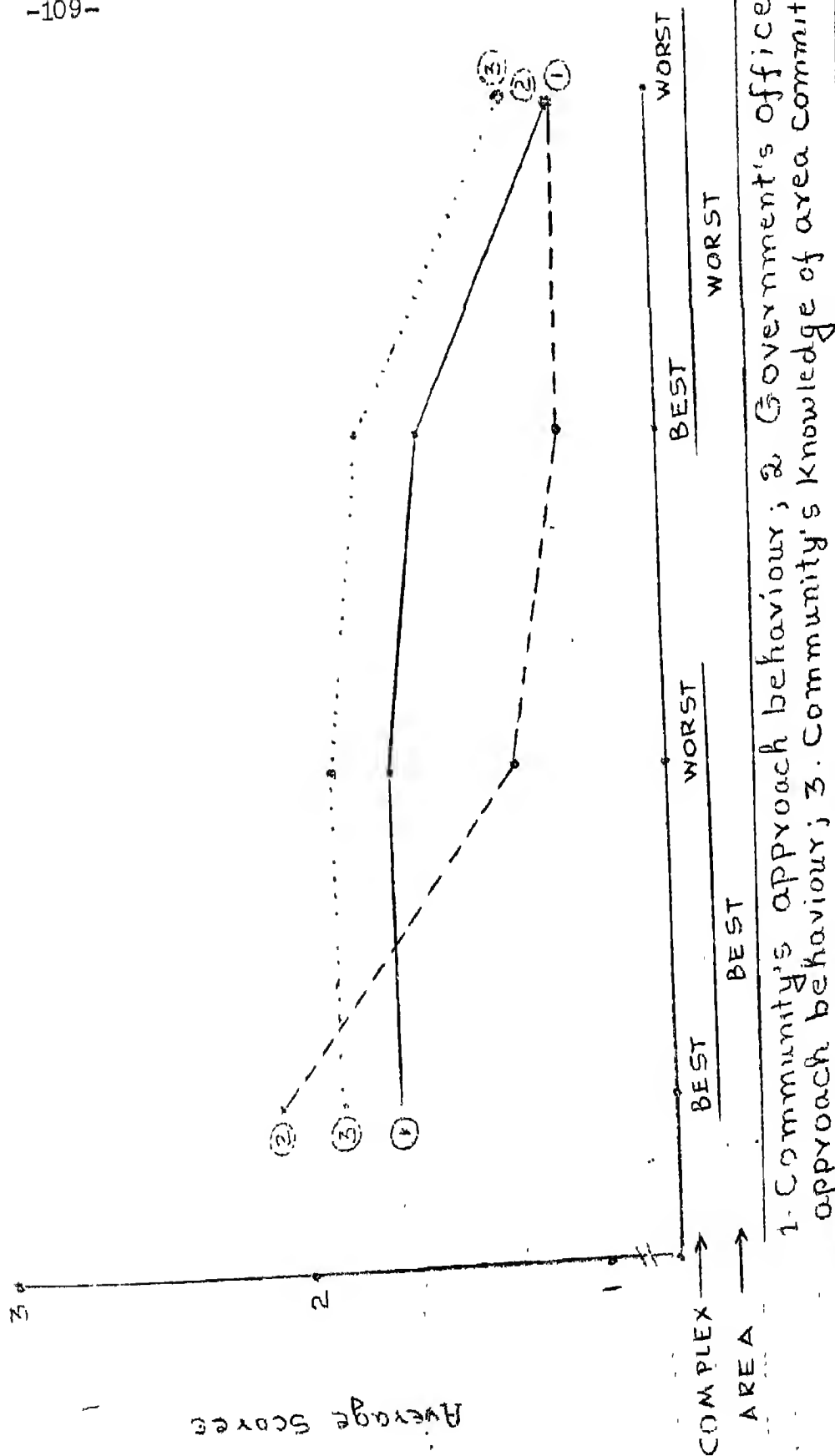


Figure 5.2: Community-government inter-face

Table 2

F-ratios and level of significance of community-government interface

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Interfer</u>	<u>Interaction</u>
(a) Community's approach behaviour	6.22*	4.52*	10.69**
(b) Government officer's approach behaviour	11.23**	4.72*	20.38**
(c) Community's knowledge of Area Committee	7.21*	3.19	6.69*

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, $p < .10$.

3. Political Interference

It is interesting to note that 77.40 per cent respondents of the Control group and 60.00 per cent of the Control group report political interference by the local politicians. However, only two of 12 Sankul and Hukumat members report such interferences. The Control group 1, members (2 = 3) do report political interference and it is the 100% of the Control group who complain about the political interferences in transfer, posting, and day-to-day functioning of the government functionaries. On the contrary, the AASGs and AECs do not report any interference by the local politicians. One of them does concede that the State level politicians do interfere once in while, but the problem is not serious at all. In sum, the political interference is more of a serious problem in the

Control group than in the Complex group. It is likely that because the Complex represents an integrated "whole" which due to its experimental nature is receiving focus of all concerned and hence is less susceptible to political interferences.

CHAPTER VI

The Balance Sheet

The School Complex is an imaginative scheme (Kothari Commission, 1966) to associate primary schools with a centrally located middle school, and middle schools with a nuclear secondary school so that the schools of a geographical area may function as a whole (i.e. a Complex) - drawing on each other's resources and planning their development with minimum of external support. Because the Complex can take care of its own, governmental supervision and control are minimized, and a decentralised and qualitatively better administrative structure can be provided to the Complex.

The Government of Bihar at the initiative of the then Education Minister introduced the scheme in the districts of Nalanda, Palamau, and Sitamarhi towards the end of 1975. It was, however, only in the district of Nalanda that a vigorous effort was made to actualise the idea. The district was divided into 11 Areas about 10 secondary schools each. Each secondary school served as a nucleus for a Complex (Sankul) covering 3 to 4 middle schools (Up-sankuls). 4 to 5 primary schools were tagged to each of the middle schools. The headmaster of the secondary school was designated as Sankul Pradhan (SP)

and was vested with the power to inspect the component middle and primary schools. Similarly, the headmaster of a middle school was named as the Up-sankul Pradhan (USP) and was entrusted with the responsibility of inspecting the tagged primary schools. The UP and USPs and selected teachers/headmasters of primary schools constituted a Complex Committee which was empowered to make all routine as well as developmental decisions of the Complex. A Subject Panel of 5 teachers had the job of giving demonstration lectures and designing model lessons.

The previously existing dual administration was integrated into one line of authority and was decentralised so that a senior class two officer can be posted at the Area level. The officer, designated as Area Education Officer (AEO) had the power to inspect all schools and to dispose of most of the matters regarding the teachers of the Complex. He was assisted by an Assistant Area Education Officer (AAEO) who was also to supervise the middle and primary schools and to process their teachers' salary bills, etc.

The administrative and academic structures were designed to increase the number of inspections and to ensure that teachers are regular and punctual, that courses are completed on time, that the scarce resources of the schools (e.g. equipments, teach-

ing aids, teachers etc.) can be maximally utilised, etc. There were provisions for annual calendar graduated up to weekly allocation of teaching work, syllabi, free distribution of books to poor students, good library and laboratory at the nucleus school, and substitute teachers. The programme was to hold centralised examinations and evaluation of answer books at the district level, to arrange inter-Complex and inter-Area competition in sports, debates, and cultural activities. In sum, the scheme strived to help the Complexes develop not only as an attractive place of learning but an "identity" around which all round development of the students and teachers can be realised.

The enthusiasm for implementing the scheme lasted for about a year and a quarter. With the change in the Government, the new Education Minister announced in the district of Nalanda itself that the scheme is to be withdrawn - causing slackness in all concerned. Thereafter, the School Complex is just limping and waiting for the political cloud to clear in either way.

Our study of four Complexes and a comparable Control group shows that the administrative and academic restructuring was indeed effected with a strong political will, but without due preparation. Orientation sessions, discussions, etc. were either

non-existent or inadequate. The limited knowledge of the functioning of the Complex was lacking; and no effort was made to make the scheme acceptable.

The scheme is still credited with success in a number of crucial areas. Number of inspections increased and the teachers on the whole felt that the inspections guided them to better ways of teaching. There were a few instances of absence of inspections. However, increased inspections resulted into greater punctuality and regularity of teachers, their greater involvement in teaching, and improved academic climate. As a consequence, students' attendance as well as their interest in study improved. They were given home work and they carried it more seriously. They performed better in examinations and used less of unfair means. Students' discipline as well as their respect for the teachers also improved. The headmasters of the Complex Schools were perceived to be more receptive to the students' problems and were helpful too. If a headmaster was receptive and helpful, the teachers were punctual, the courses were completed on time, the laboratory got better equipped, homework was corrected more thoroughly, and the students received feedbacks about their performances in examinations. Of course, the scheme increased the workload of the teachers, made them prepare the lessons, and affected their life style. This

probably was one of the reasons that the Government was pressurised to withdraw the scheme. On the whole the Complex groups students were perceived to improve more than the Control group schools.

In some other crucial areas, the scheme did not make any dent. For example, the calendar, syllabi, and books could not be made available except in the initial stage. The centralised examinations and evaluations, inter-Complex and inter-Area competition in sports, debates, and cultural activities could be arranged only once. The programme of learning through work experiences, study trips, practical training, nucleus library and laboratory, exchange of teachers and teaching aids, etc., were really non-starter. In fact, most of the schools could not provide minimum facilities for sports and other extra-curricular activities. The Control group schools were better to the Complex group in many of these facilities.

Part of the reasons for limited success of the scheme was non-availability of resources and part, the attitudes, orientations, and socio-cultural values of the constituents. It is true that poor condition of school building, shortage of class rooms, furniture, teachers and teaching aids, absence of play grounds, etc. do de-motivate the teachers as well as the students. These constraints might even erode the enthusiasm of the most obstinate

idealists. For rest, they provide a weekly salary. If the teachers are primarily interested in finding their house-hold work, students in the village promoted, and the officials in handling over the teachers and the headmasters, any scheme, which tends to bring them into close interactive relationship, is likely to create power tangle and conflicts. We identified two loci of power struggle: the District Education office and the Complex. The District Education Officer (DEO) feels that the office of the District Superintendent of Education (DSE) is a redundant and that his Assistant District Education Officer (ADEO) is not providing the type of assistance he should. The fact that DSE and ADEO belonged to the line of authority in the previous arrangement, he was responsible for the middle and primary schools while ADEO used to supervise the secondary schools and reported to the District Education Officer indicated that the integration of previously practices and administration was not complete. The two lines of authority were merged into one, yet their functions remained differentiated although overlapping.

The headmasters of secondary and middle schools in their new roles of Sankul Pradhan and Up-sankul Pradhan (respectively) enjoyed expanded power domain which in turn aroused reactance in the teachers who were now subjected to the academic

as well as government bosses. The triangular relationships between government officials, headmasters, and teachers were found to be alive and full of potential conflicts. The scheme did not visualise the power aspect of the relationship and hence did not evolve any mechanism to handle the conflicts.

These attitudinal and motivational problems are secondary to the impoverished condition of the schools which is likely to remain the most serious constraint because the Government is not in a position to provide any massive assistance. It is the community, surprisingly enough, which is capable to rescue the schools. What is needed is an initiative and the evidence to the community that the school is relevant to the life of the community. If the community accepts a school as its part, it can certainly build and repair school buildings, provide minimum of furniture, supervision, etc. The case of the SWRC at Tilonia, Ajamer (Rajasthan) is a good example.

Our study shows that the scheme did not succeed in bridging the gap between the school system and the community. The committees which were formed at the district, Area, and Complex levels were defunct to start with. The community is aware of the problems of the school, but feels that it is the responsibility of the Government to solve them. The teachers and headmasters do expect help from

the community but do not want to get involved in the life of the community. They want to stay at their elitistic position and to play the limited role of teaching. They have neither the awareness nor the inclination that the school curriculum may incorporate subjects which are directly relevant to the community, that the community may provide valuable ideas and information to the teachers, that the school calendar can be adjusted with the crop patterns and festivals, that the community can play a useful role in the management of the schools, and that the school can serve as a centre for planning and developmental activities of the community. The scheme did not go into these details. We may further argue that the teachers - because they represent a more organised sector, namely the school system - can take the initiative to start the communication flow. In fact a teacher's success in procuring the cooperation of the community may be employed as a criterion for his recognition and advancement. An inter-school competition in this respect may serve as good motivation. Our study, however, discloses a very limited contact between the teachers and the community. Quite often they meet accidentally. Once a while guardians go to school - but with the limited purpose of discussing the study problems of their wards.

Preparing teachers, headmasters, and government officials for new or expanded roles is an important engradiant for the success of the scheme of School Complex, which was duly emphasised by the Kothari Commission, but was by and large ignored in the experiment in Nalanda. A three-facet training programme needs to be properly designed for (a) providing information about the functioning of the School Complex, (b) up-to-dating the subject matter knowledge of teachers, and (c) motivating the constituents of the scheme to make it a success by adequate communication and appreciation of each other's contributions.

Monitoring the progress and the bottlenecks, and providing guidance and corrective measures on regular basis are indispensable for a complicated scheme like the School Complex. The District Education Office may collect the data and discharge the functions of monitoring, evaluation, and guidance.

In sum, the scheme of School Complex which was experimented in the district of Nalanda for a brief duration of one and a quarter years was not quite given a fair deal. Despite numerous handicapps, it has succeeded in making a dent in the school which proves its potential. If given political and governmental support, it might show a way out

Of mass we find ourselves in. The experiment in
essence is still on.

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